

EXCLUSIVE LESSONS FROM TOM QUAYLE » SAM BELL » NICK JENNISON » GIORGIO SERCI

Guitar Interactive

85

+ INTERVIEWS



ASKING
ALEXANDRIA
+ SEETHER

ZAKK WYLDE

BLACK LABEL SOCIETY IS BACK WITH DOOM CREW INC.

ZAKK
WYLDE
TECH SESSION

LATEST GEAR REVIEWS

PRS VINTAGE
VOX IBANEZ
VOX GUILD

AND MORE

Video Box

OUR GENERATION

Kinga Głyk plays **Swing Bass 66** nickelwound electric bass guitar strings: in production and used on era-defining records since 1966





ON



Welcome to ISSUE

85

WELCOME TO ISSUE 85 OF GUITAR INTERACTIVE MAGAZINE...



Heralded as one of the most ferocious and intense guitar players to have ever picked up the instrument, **Zakk Wylde** is showing no signs of resting on his laurels in 2021 as he and

Black Label Society return with 'Doom Crew Inc.' With the new release taking metal fans by storm, Zakk took some time out to once again chat with Gi.

Continuing our exclusive features on this issue's cover artist, Danny Gill breaks down the powerful phrasing and killer technique of Zakk Wylde, in this issue's Tech Session.

If that's not enough, we also have exclusive interviews with hard-rock heavyweights **Shaun**

Morgan of **Seether** and **Asking Alexandria's Ben Bruce** to discuss their brand new releases and much more.

As usual, with every issue, we have a whole host of the latest and best gear reviews from around the world of guitar, with our team of world-class gear reviewers offering their unique insight, expertise, and personality, which as always, I hope you will enjoy. However, if that's still not enough, don't forget all of our exclusive lessons from Tom Quayle, Nick Jennison, Sam Bell & Giorgio Serci.

Happy Holidays and see you all in 2022.

Guitar Interactive

Editor

Jonathan Graham
jonathan@guitarinteractivemagazine.com

Contributors

Jonathan Graham, Nick Jennison

Review crew

Nick Jennison, Sam Bell, Dan Veall, & Rodney McG

Columns

Tom Quayle, Sam Bell, Nick Jennison & Giorgio Serci

Advertising Manager

Helen Bavester
helen@guitarinteractivemagazine.com

USA Advertising Sales

Lisa Spiteri
LisaSpiteri@guitarinteractivemagazine.com

Design and layout

Simon Gibbs
simon@guitarinteractivemagazine.com

Video Editors

James Masterton & Dave Kidd

Sound Editor

Dave Kid

Camera

James M

Publisher

Guitar In

Publisher

Kim Wal

(c) Copyright 2021 Guitar Interactive Ltd. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means without prior permission of the copyright owners. The views expressed in



GET IN TOUCH Ask a question, share your ideas and let's see what works!



iGuitarMag

Tweet your ideas and thoughts here



[facebook.com/
GuitarInteractive
Magazine](http://facebook.com/GuitarInteractiveMagazine)

Keep up-to-date with the latest from Gi



guitarinteractivemagazine.com

Full user access to our extensive website and content

engineering
ld & James Masterton

s
asterton

ers
teractive Ltd

ing Director
ler

Contact

Sales and Information line:

+ 44 (0)1708 757 337

Fax Line: +44 (0)1708 757 528

Address: Unit A, Chesham Close, Romford,
Essex, RM7 7PJ, UK

Ad Index

Our advertisers.

BOHEMIAN 57

CF MARTIN 15

CORT GUITARS 97

DEAN MARKLEY 103

ELIXIR 160-165

ELIXIR 75

FISHMAN 27

FOXGEAR 57

MOOER 41&69

OVATION 117

PRS 83

ROTOND 2&3

SENNHEISER 32

TASCAM 49

TECH 21 NYC 91

VOX UK 17

VOX USA 39



ISSUE 85

Contents

INTERVIEWS



010

ZAKK WYLDE:
Gi editor Jonathan Graham catches up with the 'Wylde' man of rock and roll as he and Black Label Society return with Doom Crew Inc

A black and white photograph of the band Black Label Society. From left to right: Michael Amott (drums), Zakk Wylde (guitar), Chris Holmes (bass), and Mike Orlando (guitar). They are all wearing dark clothing and have long hair or beards.

022

BEN BRUCE:
We chat with the Asking Alexandria lead guitarist about the band's latest album, 'See What's on the Inside' and much more in this exclusive Gi feature.

A black and white photograph of Ben Bruce, the lead guitarist of Asking Alexandria. He is shown from the waist up, wearing a patterned shirt, looking down at something in his hands. He has a tattooed arm.

034

SHAUN MORGAN:
To celebrate these achievements and mark the group's 20th anniversary, Seether released Vicennial - 2 Decades of Seether earlier this year—Gi chats with Shaun Morgan about this incredible collection.

A black and white photograph of the band Seether. From left to right: Shaun Morgan (drums), Dan Donegan (bass), Shaun Morgan (vocals/guitar), and Michael Clifford (guitar).

REVIEWS - GUITARS, AMPS

- 064** Ibanez AZ2204N Prestige
- 070** BC Rich Warlock Extreme
- 076** VOX Bobcat V90
- 080** Vintage 25th Anniversary Edition 2
- 086** Cort G280
- 092** PRS Archon 50
- 098** Vox Mini Go Series 10瓦
- 104** Mooer Audio X2 Series Reverb
- 108** Eventide TriceraChorus

THE QUIETROOM

- 114** Sheeran by Lowden SO4
- 118** Guild A-20 Bob Marley Signature
- 122** Cordoba Friederich Luth Select
- 126** Martin D-13E Road Series

THE BASSMENT

- 132** Vintage VJ74SVB 25th Anniversary
- 136** MarkBass MB JP BLACK 4 CR RW
- 140** Vox Starstream 1H Active Bass

046

ZAKK WYLDE

Nick Jennison

COMPETITIONS

COMPETITION TIME
WIN! an Seymour Duncan Powerstage 200

60

COLUMNS

TOM QUAYLE
Soloing Over Chord Changes - Part 3

146

150

SAM BELL
Rhythm Guitar Methods - Part 10

GIORGIO SERCI
Creative Fingerstyle

154

160

NICK JENNISON
Acoustic Tech Tips Part 2 - Sponsored by Elixir

THE Interviews

Heralded as one of the most ferocious and intense guitar players to have ever picked up the instrument, **Zakk Wylde** is showing no signs of resting on his laurels in 2021 as he and Black Label Society return with 'Doom Crew Inc.' With the new release taking metal fans by storm, Zakk took some time out to once again chat with Gi.

Since forming in Pretoria, South Africa, in 1999, Seether has amassed a global fan base that has grown organically, offering their fans camaraderie, comfort, and a sense of personal power around the world. To mark the group's 20th anniversary, Seether released Vicennial - 2 Decades of Seether earlier this year—Gi chats with **Shaun Morgan** about this incredible collection.

Since 2008, Asking Alexandria has established a world of rock music that is entirely their own. Now, over a billion cumulative streams and views later and a new label behind them, the U.K.-based rock group are readying their next chapter. We chat with the band's lead guitarist **Ben Bruce** about Asking Alexandria's latest album, 'See What's on the Inside' and much more in this exclusive Gi feature.

GI85

IN-DEPTH CHATS WITH GUITAR'S BIGGEST NAMES





DOOM CR

Heralded as one of the most ferocious and intense guitar players to have ever picked up a guitar, Zakk Wylde and Black Label Society return with 'Doom Crew Inc.' With the new release taking metal to new heights, we sat down with Jonathan Graham, and gives some interesting insight into the life and times of the 'Wylde'.

Zakk Wylde: BLS – **REW INC.**

Up the instrument, Zakk Wylde is showing no signs of resting on his laurels in 2021 as he fans by storm, Zakk took some time out to chat with Guitar Interactive Magazine editor man of rock and roll. »

BLACK

Label Society bandleader Zakk Wylde wields his guitar like a Viking weapon, bashing out thick riffage and squeezing out expressive squeals as if the glory of his Berserker brotherhood depends upon every single note, which of course, it does.

Charismatic beast and consummate showman, Wylde puts his massive heart and earnest soul on display with unbridled, unchained, animalistic passion in Black Label Society—whether it's a crushingly heavy blues-rock barnstormer or a piano-driven ode to a fallen brother. Each Black Label Society album is another opportunity to top the one before it, but like AC/DC or The Rolling Stones, BLS isn't here to reinvent the wheel. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. It's a brand we can trust.

Mighty missives like "Damn the Flood," "In This River," "Stillborn," "My Dying Time," "Queen of Sorrow," and "Blood is Thicker Than Water" have amassed millions of downloads and streams. They are the soundtracks to sweat soaked revelry, jubilant evenings that descend into bewildering mornings, and adrenaline-fueled sports.

Zakk Wylde Interview



“A **lifelong disciple** of Black Sabbath and the longest-serving guitar-shredder for the Ozzman himself, Wylde co-wrote many modern Ozzy Osbourne classics...”

To many, Wylde is synonymous with pinch harmonics as much as Chuck Berry dreamt up the duck walk. Zakk's signature Les Paul Bullseye guitar hangs in the Rock N' Roll Hall of Fame. His infamous leather bellbottoms hang in the Grammy Museum. His handprints are on Hollywood's Rock Walk of Fame. He's performed the National Anthem at major sporting events. He wrote the 2013 Major League Baseball theme for ESPN. He even momentarily joined Axl Rose, Slash, and Duff in Guns N' Roses. He is a playable character in the Guitar Hero games.





Martin

EXPECT

THE BEST

Whether you're just starting out gigging at a local coffee shop or you're taking the stage at a big music festival, you need a guitar that brings out your best every time. You can't go wrong with a Martin D-X2E Burst or any X Series guitar. They're durable, affordable and they sound great, giving you the confidence to wow your audience the first time and every time. Learn why Martin's X Series checks all the boxes at martinguitar.com/xseries.

“We incorporated Father Dario even more into the solos, doubling with me and **being more involved** in that regard.”

A lifelong disciple of Black Sabbath and the longest-serving guitar-shredder for the Ozzman himself, Wynde co-wrote modern Ozzy Osbourne classics like “No More Tears,” “Mama I’m Coming Home,” “Road to Nowhere,” and “Miracle Man.” Together with Ozzy bassist Blasko and drummer Joey Castillo (ex-Queens Of The Stone Age), Wynde pays faithful tribute to the forefathers of metal as frontman for Zakk Sabbath.



Black Label Society - Set You Free (Official Music Video)



**BUILT UPON A RICH AND INNOVATIVE LEGACY,
THE NEW VOX GUITAR RANGE STANDS OUT
WITH VINTAGE FLAVOUR AND MODERN DESIGN.**

The Bobcat S66 and V90 bring back the spirit of classic Italian-made guitars, the Giulietta 3D and 3PS expand the possibilities of archtop guitars with the AREOS-D and Super Capacitor preamp systems, and the SDC-1 Mini makes playability and portability accessible to everyone.

Learn More at VOXAMPS.CO.UK/GUITARS

One part invading horde and all parts travelling carnival party, Black Label Society traverses the world powered by caffeine and cacophony. BLS engages and inspires audiences everywhere they go, on every radio dial they burn, inviting all comers to join in and participate in their brotherhood and sisterhood of hard rock and vigor.

The latest 12-track album is both a tribute to the band's "first to bleed, last to leave" road crew and a salute to the legion whose support, stretching back to 1998, rivals that of the KISS Army. The stomping, heavy, bluesy, recklessly unhinged hard-rock-metal quartet are part invading horde, and part travelling carnival – summoning caffeine-fueled cacophony on records and the stage.

"If there is one thing that Zakk loves, it is comedy. More specifically, classic comedy (ala Mel Brooks, etc.) We both love it, and I think that's why we work so well together. We both operate on that same wavelength where if he sends me a kernel of an idea and I immediately know where to take it," said director Justin H. Reich." For example, the "End of Days" video idea started with Zakk sending me viral videos of a panda and bear chasing each other through a mall, which I thought were hilarious and gave us a great starting point to create our own original story. It gave us plenty of funny moments and introduced characters normally not seen in a



Black Label Society - End of Days (Official Music Video)

Black Label Society music video – luckily, we were able to pull it off and create something fun and buzzworthy that BLS fans all over will enjoy.”

The songs are odes to celebration and mourning, recorded in Zakk’s home studio, the Black Vatican. On this album, Zakk trades solos and twin-guitar parts with Dario

Lorina, backed by the rumble of longtime bassist John “J.D.” DeServio and powerhouse drummer Jeff Fabb.

“We incorporated Father Dario even more into the solos, doubling with me and being more involved in that regard,” said frontman Zakk Wylde. “It really, truly is a two-guitar album, more so than ever. A twin guitar band, whether it’s the Allman Brothers or Judas Priest, with harmony lines, unison lines,



and trading off solos. It stemmed from the live shows, where we'd both go into the crowd and extend songs like 'Fire It Up.'"

Now ten studio albums deep, with solo records, Ozzy shows, and Zakk Sabbath tours all kicking ass simultaneously, Black Label Society rides ever forward, fist held high.

Black Label Society's *Doom Crew Inc.* is out now via Spinefarm Records.



Black Label Society— Doom Crew Inc. tracklist:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Set You Free | 5. End of Days | 9. Gospel of Lies |
| 2. Destroy & Conquer | 6. Ruins | 10. Shelter Me |
| 3. You Made Me Want to Live | 7. Forsaken | 11. Gather all my Sins |
| 4. Forever and a Day | 8. Love Reign Down | 12. Farewell Ballad |

In support of their new album, ‘Doom Crew Inc.’, Black Label Society will hit the road across Europe next summer for a run of festival dates.

See Black Label Society live at the following shows:

02/06 RockFest 2022 @ Tampere, Tampere Stadium

04/06 Atlas Rock 2022 @ Gävle, Gasklockorna

10/06 Download Festival 2022 @ Castle Donington, Donington Park

16/06 Graspop Metal Meeting 2022 @ Dessel, Festivalpark Stenehei

16/06 Rock The Ring 2022 @ Hinwil, Rock The Ring

23/06 Hellfest 2022 - 2 @ Clisson, Hellfest

24/06 Rock Imperium Festival 2022 @ Cartagena, Parque El Batel

09/07 Masters of Rock 2022 @ Vizovice, Masters of Rock

For more info, please visit:
blacklabelsoociety.net





Since 2008, Asking Alexandria has established a world of rock music that is entirely theirs. Now, as they approach their tenth anniversary, the UK-based rock group are readying their next chapter.

Jonathan Graham chats exclusively about 'The Day After', 'What's on the Inside' and much more.

BRUCE:



er own. Now, over a billion cumulative streams and views later and a new label behind
s with the band's lead guitarist Ben Bruce about Asking Alexandria's latest album, 'See
ore in this exclusive Gi feature.

COMPOSED

today of their original line-up – Ben Bruce (guitar, backing vocals), Danny Worsnop (lead vocals), James Cassells (drums), Cameron Liddell (guitar), and Sam Bettley (bass) – the quintet has arrived at a place of clarity and refreshed sense of artistic purpose.

In the early months of 2021, all five members found themselves hunkered down in a house in Franklin, TN, to write and record their new seventh studio album. It was the first time in over a decade that all were together in the same studio. Armed with a new sense of dedication to themselves and to their fans, they went back to their roots and pulled inspiration from some of their earliest influences and musical heroes – Led Zeppelin, Metallica, AC/DC, Queen. With time to reflect on their journey thus far, they began preparing their next steps forward as a band. With no gimmicks or cheap tricks to fall back on and a renewed appetite

Guitar Interactive

Ben Bruce Interview

BEN BRUCE SEE WHAT'S ON THIS SIDE



for writing together, they fell in love again, with music and with each other as band-mates.

In the band's 10+ years as a worldwide touring and recording force, they have achieved unprecedented success earmarked by two gold-certified singles (namely, "Final Episode (Let's Change The Channel)" and "Not The American Average") and three consecutive

top 10 debuts on the Billboard Top 200—"Reckless & Relentless" (2011), "From Death to Destiny" (2013), and "The Black" (2016). In addition to headlining packed gigs on five continents, they've graced stages alongside Guns N' Roses, Green Day, Avenged Sevenfold, Alice In Chains, and Slipknot, to name a few. 2017's self-titled LP Asking Alexandria spawned two of the group's biggest singles to

"In the band's 10+ years as a worldwide touring and recording force, they have achieved unprecedented success earmarked by two gold-certified singles."



Asking Alexandria - Never Gonna Learn (Official Music Video)



Greg Koch
GRISTLE-TONE
SIGNATURE SERIES

P90

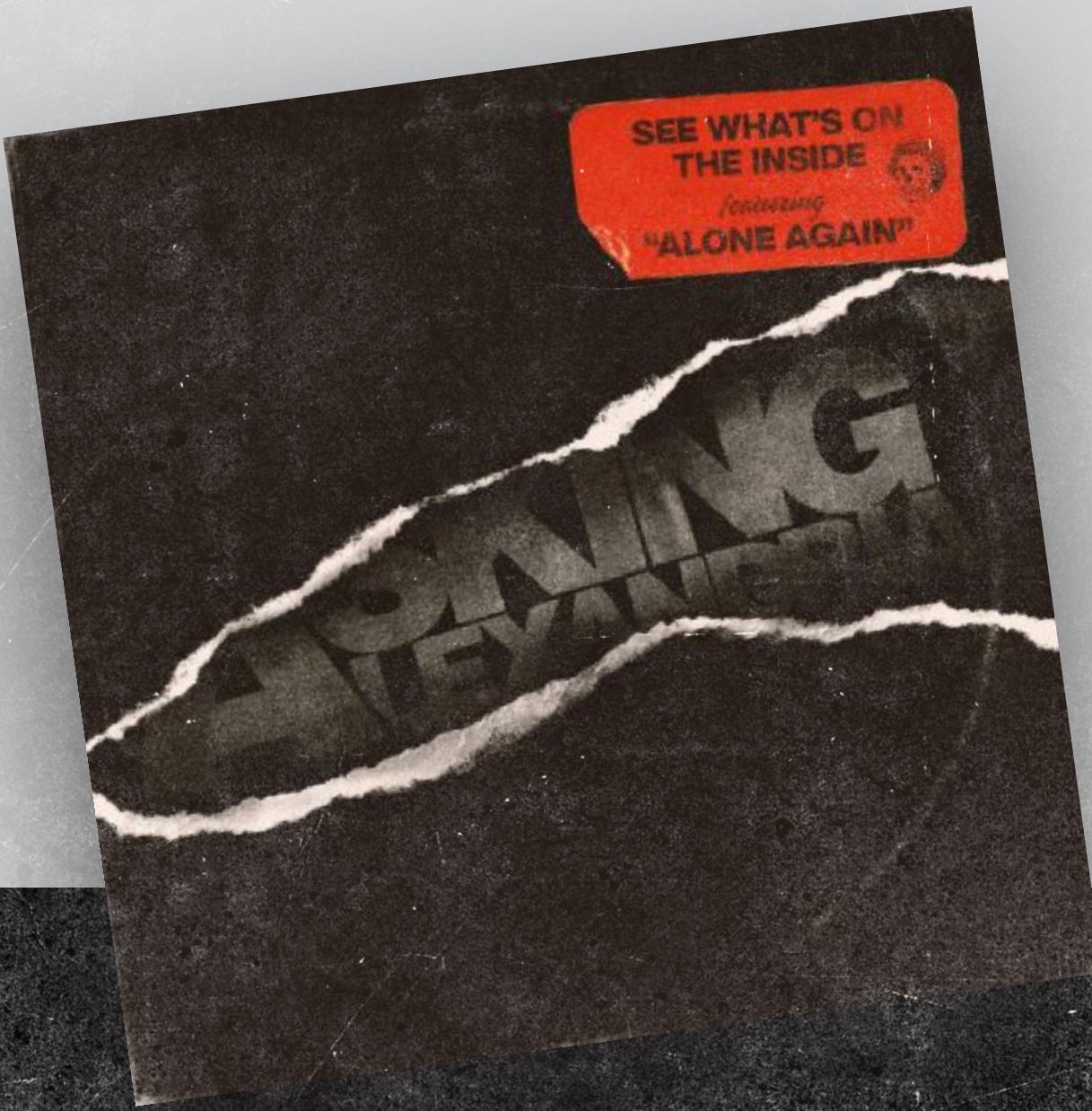


For more information visit Fishman.com/Fluence

FISHMAN FLUENCE®

date: “Alone In A Room” (Over 60 million Spotify streams) and “Into the Fire” (50 million Spotify streams). And most recently, they saw critical acclaim with their 2020 sixth full-length studio album “Like A House On Fire”.

The result of this reflection and renewed creative energy is the band’s most cohesive and self-assured record to date. The project’s first single, the poignantly powerful, guitar-driven “Alone Again,” was written by the entire band



and is a fitting first offering of the sonic journey on which the world is about to join them. But beyond its moving lyrics and soaring melodies, it is a rallying cry and a statement of a group of artists who are here to stay—and ready more than ever to be heard.

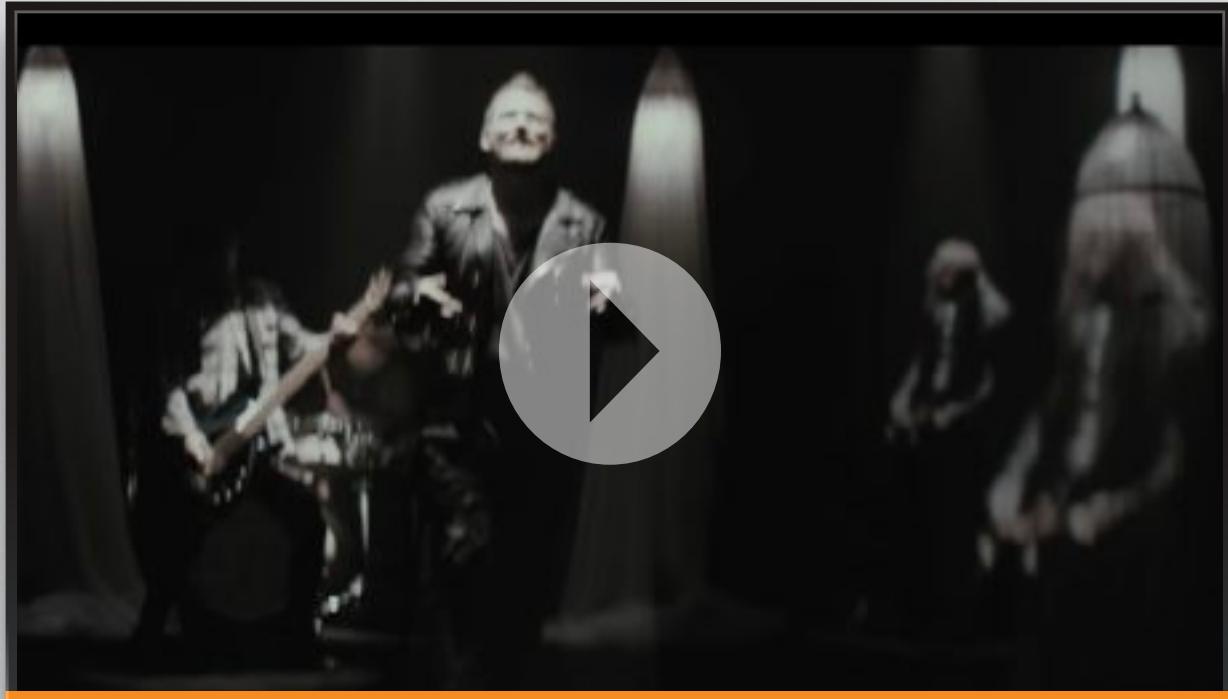
Asking Alexandria's 'See What's On The Inside' is out now on all formats via Better Noise.

ASKING ALEXANDRIA – 'SEE WHAT'S ON THE INSIDE' TRACKLIST:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Intro | 7. You've Made It This Far |
| 2. Alone Again | 8. See What's On The Inside |
| 3. Faded Out | 9. Misery Loves Company |
| 4. Never Gonna Learn | 10. Fame |
| 5. If I Could Erase It | 11. The Grey |
| 6. Find Myself | |



“The **result of this reflection** and renewed creative energy is the band’s most cohesive and self-assured record to date...”



Asking Alexandria - Alone Again (Official Music Video)



Evolution Wireless Digital

Evolving with you.

Embrace the power of a digital UHF system, ready for any RF environment. Evolution Wireless Digital raises the bar by providing the highest dynamic range of any wireless system currently on the market, utilizing advanced features that simplify your setup and guarantee the most reliable connection.

www.sennheiser.com/ew-d
#EvolvingWithYou

SENNHEISER

SEE WHAT'S ON THE INSIDE WORLD TOUR 2022

ASKING ALEXANDRIA



30 MAR	KIEV, UKRAINE	STEREOPLAZA
01 APR	MOSCOW, RUSSIA	ADRENALINE STADIUM
03 APR	ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA	A3
05 APR	MUNICH, GERMANY	NEUE THEATERFABRIK
06 APR	BERLIN, GERMANY	HUXLEY'S
08 APR	HAARLEM, NETHERLANDS	PATRONAAT
09 APR	COLOGNE, GERMANY	ESSIGFABRIK
11 APR	MANCHESTER, UK	02 RITZ
13 APR	BIRMINGHAM, UK	02 INSTITUTE
15 APR	LONDON, UK	ELECTRIC BALLROOM

WWW.ASKINGALEXANDRIA.COM

Catch Asking Alexandria on next year's 'See What's On The Inside' run live at the following shows:

For more information on Ben Bruce and Asking Alexandria, visit: askingalexandria.com





SHAUN MORGAN DECADES

Since forming in Pretoria, South Africa, in 1999, Seether has amassed a global fanbase, camaraderie, comfort, and a sense of personal power around the world. The band has sold over 15 million records worldwide, including five platinum and two gold albums, 17 #1 singles, 21 Top 5 multi-format hits, single sales to over 100 countries, and more than 100 million streams across all platforms. To celebrate these achievements and mark the group's 20th anniversary, we're taking a look back at their discography and this year—Gi chats with Shaun Morgan about this incredible collection.»



SHAUN: VICENNIAL OF SEETHER

global fan base that has grown organically, offering their fans
Their impressive sales and chart history includes three platinum
topping 17 million and over 2 billion streams worldwide across all
anniversary, Seether released Vicennial - 2 Decades of Seether earlier

SEEACHERS

topping success. The 20 songs on this compilation have amassed 16 #1 chart positions, and all are Top 5 multi-format radio hits. This collection is an audio summary of the first 20 years of Billboard's #8 All-Time Mainstream Rock Artist, which covers the 40-year history of the chart's existence. The album, out now worldwide via Craft Recordings, was carefully curated by front-man Shaun Morgan and highlights tracks from his band's eighth full-length albums — including early breakthrough singles "Broken" and "Fine Again"; the recent #1 on both the Rock and Active Rock charts, "Dangerous"; as well as their fan-favourite cover of Wham's "Careless Whisper."

latest album 'Vicennial – 2 Decades of Seether' tells the remarkable story of the South African quartet's career and chart-

Guitar Interactive

Shaun Morgan - Interview

Comprising of Shaun Morgan, Dale Stewart, John Humphrey and Corey Lowery—Seether is Billboard's #8 All-Time Mainstream Rock Artist, which covers the 40-year history of the chart's existence. Their most recent album (the band's eighth), the acclaimed 'Si Vis Pacem, Para Bellum (If You Want Peace, Prepare for War),' was released in 2020 via Fantasy Records. A primal mix of euphoria and misery, the album's material ranks among the strongest of Seether's illustrious career and includes the #1 singles "Dangerous" and "Bruised and Bloodied." In addition to its work in music, Seether also created the 'Rise Above Fest' to raise awareness for suicide prevention and mental illness.

Seether has always remained true to its roots while maintaining enough forward-thinking momentum to stay relevant, and 'Vicennial' is the perfect showcase of that achievement. The group broke into the mainstream in 2002 with the rock hit "Fine Again" and cemented their status at



"Twenty years is a **major milestone** for us; we've been on an amazing ride."

NO SHELTER

Seether - No Shelter (Official Visualizer)

VOX
MINI GO
mini amp



VGH
HEADPHONES

audio-technica

“I always try to **push myself** on every album I do, and attempt things which are more extreme than previously...”

the fore of the scene two years later with the international hit “Broken,” which featured guest vocals from Amy Lee of Evanescence. Subsequent singles like 2005’s “Remedy” and 2007’s “Fake It” charted high for such a heavy band, while Seether’s full-length work also proved popular: 2011’s Holding Onto Strings Better Left to Fray and 2014’s Isolate and Medicate both reached the Top Five in the U.S. The group continued to find success into

the next decade, releasing their acclaimed and the aforementioned eighth long-player, Si Vis Pacem, Para Bellum, in 2020.

Known for their dedication to their fans, the latest release saw Seether select fan-submitted artwork for the ‘Vicennial’ album cover. Available now digitally and on CD, a Seether.com exclusive 1,500-unit limited-edition custom mixed opaque purple 2-LP vinyl can be pre-ordered now for its January 7 release date.

A video player interface featuring a play button in the center. Behind it is a dark, abstract background with a glowing orange and red circular pattern. In the bottom left corner of the video area, the word "WEAK" is written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. At the bottom of the video player, the text "Seether - Weak (Official Visualizer)" is displayed in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

WEAK

Seether - Weak (Official Visualizer)

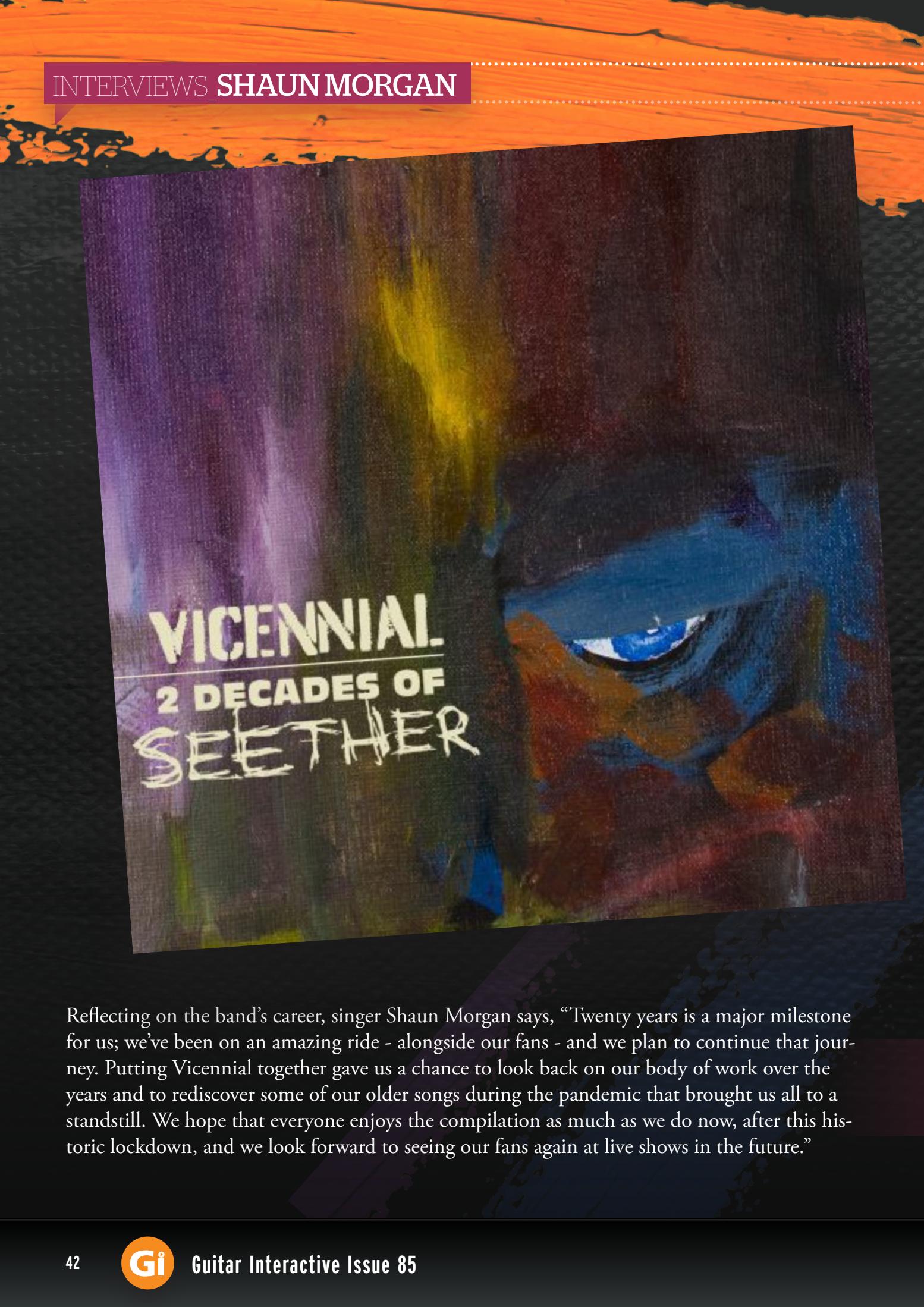


- PREAMP MODEL X
- CAB
- GROOVE LOOP

X2 Series

- REVERB R7
- DELAY D7

MOOER



VICENNIAL
2 DECADES OF
SEETHER

Reflecting on the band's career, singer Shaun Morgan says, "Twenty years is a major milestone for us; we've been on an amazing ride - alongside our fans - and we plan to continue that journey. Putting Vicennial together gave us a chance to look back on our body of work over the years and to rediscover some of our older songs during the pandemic that brought us all to a standstill. We hope that everyone enjoys the compilation as much as we do now, after this historic lockdown, and we look forward to seeing our fans again at live shows in the future."

To top off a great year for the band, recently Seether was the newest addition to the Rock and Roll Hall Of Fame's popular "Right Here Right Now" exhibit, joining other luminaries in the exhibit including Billie Eilish, Lady Gaga, Harry Styles, Alabama Shakes, Taylor Swift, The Lumineers, Kacey Musgraves and The Weeknd.

Seether's 'Vicennial ' is out now worldwide via Craft Recordings.

SEETHER VICENNIAL 2 DECADES OF SEETHER TRACKLIST

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Fake It | 11. Nobody Praying for Me |
| 2. Remedy | 12. Careless Whisper |
| 3. Fine Again | 13. Truth |
| 4. Broken | 14. Gasoline |
| 5. Words As Weapons | 15. Betray and Degrade |
| 6. Country Song | 16. Breakdown |
| 7. Let You Down | 17. Same Damn Life |
| 8. Rise Above This | 18. The Gift |
| 9. Weak | 19. Driven Under |
| 10. Tonight | 20. Dangerous |

For more information on Shaun Morgan and Seether, visit:

www.seether.com



THE Tech Session

In each issue, the Guitar Interactive Tech Session shines the spotlight on one of guitar's biggest icons. These in-depth lessons look to break down style, techniques and individual nuances that make these great players stand out from the crowd in the form of a tailor-made composition.

All Gi TECH SESSION are accompanied with full tablature and a backing track – to help you learn, practice and utilise these new techniques in no time.

GI85

UNDERSTANDING WHAT MAKES THE GREATS GREAT



TECH SESSION_ZAKK WYLDE

THE TECH SESSION FILES

Zakk
Wylde

In this issue's Tech Session, Zakk Wylde discusses his most exciting guitar rig, the guitars he's been toting around the world, his secret weapon for Ozzy Osbourne's tour, his shredding vocabulary, and how he's been abandoning his guitar force多



Tech Session

In this month's Tech Session, **Nick Jennison** takes a closer look at the style of our metal icon. Probably the most technically gifted and intense guitar player of a generation, Zakk Wylde is part of a proud lineage of Les Paul players dating back to the birth of heavy metal. Rising to prominence in 1988 as the sideman for Black Sabbath's Tony Iommi, Zakk's ferocious pentatonic-based playing stood in stark contrast to the neo-classical guitarists of the age. Like John Sykes and Gary Moore before him, Zakk fused a blues-rock inspired sound with next-level chops and unparalleled intensity to create a sound that drips with recklessness, but is in fact tightly controlled and calculated. It might sound like the product of sheer brute force, but Zakk knows precisely what he's doing, and his playing is remarkably well organised. »

**GENERAL PRELIMINARY
GUIDANCE****WHILE** Zakk's vocabulary is

undoubtedly distinctive, his style is less about what's being played and more about how it's being played. Keep the following in mind as you go forward.

- Perhaps the most immediately recognisable aspect of Zakk's playing is that monstrous vibrato. Moderate in speed, the intensity comes from the sheer width.

A tone in width at the very least, Zakk's vibrato is often a tone and a half wide (that's three frets). Be careful with your muting, and unless you're also a man-mountain with hands to match, consider light strings!

- Zakk's right-hand touch is often a lot lighter than you might imagine. Picked runs are certainly aggressive, but those howling sustained notes require a more deft approach. The best way to achieve this is by relaxing the right-hand index-finger-and-thumb assembly to allow the pick to "brush" the strings. »

Zakk Wylde - Tech Session Performance

TO DAW

TASCAM's newest line of USB audio interfaces – the **US-HR Series** – offers three models for every type of home studio environment. Whether you need one or four inputs, the US-1x2HR, US2x2HR, and US-4x4HR provide a variety of great-sounding versatile I/O options for producers, engineers, podcasters, live streamers, and musicians of all skill levels.



When creativity strikes, you don't want frivolous technology to get in the way. But you also want a powerful easy-to-use multi-track than can do the job. That is the concept of a TASCAM **Portastudio**.

Choose from the powerhouse DP-32SD or DP-24SD, to the compact but tactile DP-03SD eight track, to the portable DP-08EX or DP-006.

OR, NOT TO DAW



DP-32SD



DP-24SD



DP-03SD



DP-08EX



DP-006

Plug, Play, Create.

TASCAM
50th
ANNIVERSARY

TASCAM
TASCAM.com

- On the subject of brushing the strings, the flesh of Zakk's right-hand index finger and thumb will usually slightly graze the strings as he picks. This is critical for creating that signature "meow-ing" tone, but it also helps with gauging the depth of the pick on the strings - especially useful with using the larger, elbow-driven picking movements Zakk is known for.

PICKING

It probably hasn't escaped your attention that Zakk is a phenomenal picker. His accuracy, tone and intensity are pretty remarkable. His technique is actually quite unusual, and if you're interest-ed in authentically reproducing his style, you'll have to get on board with it.

- Zakk's faster picking lines are usually elbow-driven (rather than wrist-based). Contrary to what some would have you believe, there's absolutely nothing wrong with picking from the elbow - it's actually one of the fastest ways you can move the pick!
- Zakk is a pretty strict downward pickslanter (see the video for a more detailed explanation). This is most likely a product of the way he wears his guitar, which is low enough to make Jimmy Page blush. The upshot of this is that upstrokes are free to move from string to string, but downstrokes require some special attention.
- "Swiping" is a big part of Zakk's string change strategy when moving to a new string after a downstroke. See the video for a more detailed breakdown, but be aware that a relaxed pick grip is what makes this work.



With all that that in mind, let's stuck in!

BARS 1-4:

We begin with a rather nasty sounding semi-tone figure. This sort of line is one of the few times you'll see Zakk performing some subtle vibrato, as you shake the B string note to create a clashing texture against the static E string note. Kick on a Uni-Vibe type effect (Zakk uses a Dunlop Rotovibe) for extra eeriness!

BARS 5-11:

We launch into a crushing drop D riff (inspired by 2000s Ozzy) with a big slide, which you can use to mask turning off your Vibe. The pinched harmonics on the low string need to scream and not "ping" - a lighter attack will really help with this.

BAR 12:

A Hendrix-inspired exchange bend - use your second finger to grab the g string as the b string goes up. Huge vibrato on the last note of this phrase is a necessity! »



Zakk Wylde - Tech Session Part 1

BARS 13-19:

There are a few quirks that make this BLS-inspired riff tick. First are the semi-harmonics on the low string. These aren't fully-fledged pinches, but the execution is similar. Start with the pick close to the bridge and move it gradually towards the neck. Big vibrato on the D7#9 chords will keep things nice and aggressive. Lock your fingers in place and move the whole left forearm to get the desired effect. Lastly, the rakes behind the bridge can be replicated on a guitar without a tune-o-matic by holding a 2nd fret natural harmonic and raking across the E to D strings.

BAR 20:

A classic downward pickslanting pentatonic lick to kick off the first solo, which is inspired by Zakk's work with Ozzy Osbourne. Bury your pick in the strings on the down-strokes, and let it rise up on the upstrokes. It's an efficient way to play this kind of line with the kind of rock-solid timing that characterises Zakk's pentatonic work.

BARS 21-24:

Starting out with some sweeping unison bends, this passage quickly moves into a descending version of the lick in bar 20. The same principles apply here. Use a sneaky pull-off on the D string to give yourself time to get into position for the "chicken-pickin'" idea that closes out this phrase.

BARS 25-26:

This four-note figure is very common in Zakk's faster playing, and once you have the mechanics down, it's surprisingly easy to carry off. Use your second finger to fret the G string notes, and concentrate on getting the upstroke on the B string in time with your left hand - the rest should take care of itself.

BAR 27:

Another downward pickslanting pentatonic lick. Don't worry about sticking rigidly to the quintuplet rhythm - as long as you get all the notes in before the next bar; everything will be fine

BARS 28:

A fun little trick for creating Whammy-type effects on a stoptail guitar. Slide down the g string with your right hand, while hammering and pulling off with your left hand. Try to stay about 2 frets above the right hand with the left, but don't worry too much about being entirely accurate with this one.

BARS 29-36:

Switch your overdrive pedal off and your chorus on for some sombre BLS-inspired balladry. The chord changes can be a little tricky and require some tidy left-hand fingering. Get right up on the tips of your fingers to make sure everything rings out as it should.

BARS 37-41:

Soaring melodic leads are a big part of Zakk's repertoire, and that's the vibe we're going for in the second solo. Be sure not to overcook the right hand with this one - a gentler touch will let the notes bloom and sing. These slower passages also give plenty of time to use the right-hand thumb and fingers to mute adjacent strings when using super wide vibrato.

BARS 42-44:

Ramping up the drama with some Schenker/Moore inspired blues lines. You can pick the faster notes pretty hard, but ease up on

the sustained notes to let the vibrato sing. The faster passage in bars 43-44 can actually benefit from being a little scrappy - too tidy, and there's no sense of danger. Be aggressive, and consider the lick in the transcription a "guideline" rather than an absolute instruction.

BARS 45-48:

Howling bends in the vein of fellow Les Paul slinger John Sykes, be quick on the way up and slow on the way down, with the most intense wailing vibrato you can muster. Kossoff would be proud! »



Zakk Wylde - Tech Session Part 2

BARS 49-50:

We're firmly back in Ozzy territory with this No More Tears inspired passage. In stark contrast to bar 44, this has to be perfectly clean and in time to achieve the desired effect. Get your downward pickslanting happening, and consider a little gentle palm muting on the d string notes for added tightness.

BARS 51-21:

We're making use of the four-note mechanic from bars 25-26 to create some dramatic arpeggio furries at the climax of this second solo. The bend at the end should be short and fast so that you can get back into the riff as quickly as possible.



BARS 53-59:

The same riff that we opened with get those legs spread wide, and if you've got the hair for it, bang that head! Or use this time to catch your breath - things are about to get a bit shreddy!

BAR 60:

The third solo is inspired by Zakk's more recent work with BLS. When he's not behaving himself with Ozzy, Zakk's playing can be downright vulgar! Stomp on your wah to really set things off.

This is also where we start to see Zakk's swiping mechanic in action. This section is still downward pickslanting all the way, but the outside string changes on the a-to-d strings and d-to-g strings are accomplished by simply battering through the muted higher string on the downstroke. If you keep your pick grip relaxed but apply plenty of force from the elbow, it should sound completely clean! These changes are marked with an (x) on the tab.

BAR 61:

More swiping here, including some tricky two-string swipes. Make the upstrokes on the higher strings your focus, and keep the grip loose. Although this is an example of Zakk's Al Di Meola in-fluence, Al would achieve this same line very differently. If you

can't make the swiping work for you, you can still carry this lick off using two-way pickslanting like Al would.

BARS 62-64:

A monstrous flurry of alternate picked notes, don't worry if things get a little garbled at times - it only adds to the excitement. Some notes are doubled up to facilitate the picking more easily, and there are swipes galore! We're not trying to be John Petrucci here - keep it intense, and consider the tab a "guideline".

BARS 65-66:

Some intense "chicken-pickin'" around a nasty sounding flat 5 note. Don't sweat the exact timing here - just go as fast as you can manage, and make sure you get that double stop idea in on beat 2 of bar 66 to bring the whole thing back into step. Use the ring and middle fingers on tour right hand and roll your left-hand pinky finger to execute the country style pedal steel lick, pre-bending the g string note as you do.

BARS 67-68:

Just when you thought things had gone completely off the deep end, we bring everything back home with something bluesy! Zakk has a tenancy to finish his solos with more "tasteful" ideas like this, and that's »

something we can all learn from. Grab the b string as you re-pick the last bend, and over-bend like crazy!

BARS 69-75:

Home stretch now, and I'm not ashamed to say that this fourth solo was inspired by Zakk's work on the Rock Star soundtrack! Give the lower string on the unison bends and some heavy vibrato, but don't worry about going as far as a tone - just enough to make them "crackle". The lick in bar 74 is best thought of as "trilling and tremolo picking at the same time", and is a John Sykes main-stay. Move both hands as fast as you can and concentrate on the downbeats - things have a habit of syncing up nicely if you do.

BARS 76-84:

We couldn't look at Zakk's playing without exploring his country and southern rock influences, and this final solo is inspired by some of his best-loved playing with Pride & Glory, with nods to Ozzy mega-ballad Mama I'm Comin' Home. Keep things strictly in time, and back the intensity down just a little.

The pedal steel bend that kicks things off is the same as the one found in bar 66, but

slower and more stately, and in a major key. The remainder of the solo blurs the line between major and minor pentatonic scales that hints at Zakk's Skynyrd influence. Tasty stuff, and a nice way to end this intense tech session!

THE TAKE-HOME:

As rock players, there's a lot we can learn from Zakk. Yes, the vocabulary might not always be the most original - it's largely pentatonic based, and very rooted in traditional blues and rock phrase-ology - but it's not what you say, rather how you say it. Zakk's supremely authoritative delivery is something we could all do with a little more of from time to time, and his tightly organised and structured playing is something that even non-guitarists can appreciate and understand. It also provides a stark contrast to the more chaotic aspects of his style, and makes the crazy stuff feel even more dangerous!

I think more than anything though, the fundamental take home is that you can play as simply or as complex as you like in rock, as long as you make it exciting.

END »



FOXGEAR

What are you waiting for?

Check out the entire range of Foxgear, Gurus and Baroni-Lab effects pedals at www.jhs.co.uk



BOHEMIAN GUITARS

Handmade, harmonically rich
ukuleles, guitars & basses.



Bohemian guitars are available from all leading music stores and online retailers



Logan J Parker photo by @fraserfinn

THE Competition

With each new edition of **Guitar Interactive Magazine** comes the chance of winning a fantastic prize in our free to enter competition.

In this issue, enter for a chance to win an Seymour Duncan Powerstage 200

Gi85

YOUR CHANCES
TO WIN

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN YOUR CHANCE TO WIN



WIN! an Seymour Duncan Pow

In this issue's competition, we are giving 1 lucky winner a chance to get their hands on a **Seymour Duncan Powerstage 200**

How do you win? It's easy.

There are loads of ways to enter! Click enter to gain more entries and have a better chance of winning this incredible prize.

ENTER

Gi

SEYMOUR DUNCAN POWERSTAGE 200

REVIEW BY NICK JENNISON

Seymour Duncan Powerstage 200 | Review | Nick Jennison

Powerstage 200

in our free entry competition!

About the Seymour Duncan Powerstage 200

Engineered to attain the best tone and performance from your pedal-based electric guitar rig, Seymour Duncan's PowerStage 200 is a miniature power amplifier that is small enough to fit right on your pedalboard. Complete with built-in speaker cabinet emulation so you can record directly into your DAW, the Seymour Duncan PowerStage 200 is a powerful solution both on stage and in the studio.

Key Features

200 Watts

Cab sim

3 band EQ with presence control

Independent bypass switches for cab sim and EQ

2 speaker outputs

DI (XLR) Output

Aux In

Internal power supply

Pre-amp and power amp clip lights to dial in your levels



For more information on Seymour Duncan products, please visit: seymourduncan.com



THE Reviews

At **Guitar Interactive**, we pride ourselves on bringing you in-depth reviews and demonstrations for only the best products the world of guitar and audio electronics has to offer.

If it's in Gi, then it's gear we'd buy! All of our written reviews and breakdowns are accompanied by a detailed video – so you can see and hear for yourself if it's right for you.

Gi85

GUITARS, AMPS AND EFFECTS



Ibanez AZ2204N Prestige

Taking adaptability to new extremes—the AZ series has established itself and carved out a place that spans everything from the warmest blues licks, to the most intense, shred-heavy metal riffs. Carrying this ethos forward, the AZ line embodies time-tested Ibanez innovation and player-focused features like a smooth, oval neck grip, a well-balanced asymmetrical body shape, and the neck heel allowing for unrivaled playability. **Nick Jennison** goes in-depth with the Ibanez AZ2204N Prestige.

THE huge success of Ibanez's AZ series of guitars (and the widespread adoption of these instruments by players of any number of styles) is a testament to the importance of clear vision in guitar design. The mission with these guitars was simple - take the outrageous playability and versatility of the RG platform, and reimagine it for the modern player.

No guitar in the range exemplifies this philosophy better than the AZ2204 - the metallic blue HSS model that we've seen in the hands of countless players, including our very own Tom Quayle, Phil Short and Sam Bell. Taking cues from the "California custom" superstrats of the last 20 years, the AZ2204 sports a flat (but not TOO flat), thin (but not TOO thin) roasted maple neck, a two-point non-locking tremolo, noiseless HSS pickups with a plethora of switching options and a clean, modern aesthetic. It's a winning combination for sure, but for players like myself it's just a little TOO modern.

The Ibanez AZ2204N is way **more than just** a palate swap..."

Enter the AZ2204N. At first glance, it looks like a re-skin of the AZ2204 with a rosewood fretboard, but there's way more to separate the two models. Let's start at the bridge. Both guitars sport the same style of Gotoh bridge, but the AZ2204N's bridge is flush to the guitar's body (rather than recessed), and uses a brass block and saddles (rather than the steel and titanium found on the original AZ2204). If you don't think this stuff makes a big difference, trust me - there's a night-and-day difference in acoustic resonance between the AZ2204 and the AZ2204N.

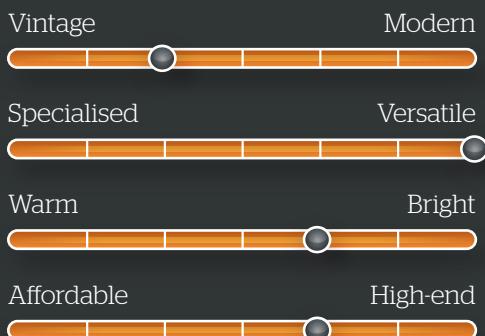
Next up, the pickups. Both guitars use the same Dyna-MIX 9 switching system, with a massive range of humbucker, »



Ibanez AZ2204N Prestige

MSRP: (UK) £1749 / (US) \$2666

The Breakdown



For fans of

More traditional guitars.

Supreme versatility.

Being an 80s shredder at heart.

For more information, please visit:

ibanez.com



The Ibanez AZ2204N is way **more than just** a palate swap..."

pseudo-humbucker and true single coil options on tap, but the AZ2204N sports a Seymour Duncan "Fortuna" set (as opposed to the "Hyperion" set in the original AZ2204). They're less aggressive, less mid-focused and more open and dynamic, and while it's hard to isolate a single variable when it comes to a guitar's tone, I'd say these pickups are much more to my tastes.



Ibanez AZ2204N Prestige



On to the neck. Here we have a similar profile to the AZ2204, but with one crucial difference - a compound radius rosewood 'board. The 8"-12" compound radius (as opposed to the straight 12" radius found on the AZ2204) is crazy comfortable, and while the factory action is a little stiff for my liking, the feel under the hand is gorgeous. As per usual, the fretwork here is immaculate, with 22 gleaming stainless steel frets and the "prestige end treatment" which makes this guitar feel played in right off the shelf. »

The Ibanez AZ2204N is way more than just a palate swap. It's a totally different beast with a much more "vintage" feel and sound, and this is even reflected in the aesthetic. While there's no doubt that the AZ2204 is a fine guitar, the AZ220N is the one I'd reach for every time.

END «





Intelligent Guitar

The GTRS Guitar is the next generation of guitar products, offering a complete, lightweight digital and analog guitar system built from the ground up. This system starts off with a one-of-a-kind guitar equipped with the GTRS Intelligent Processor designed in conjunction with master guitar builders and MOOER's digital sound engineers.

The GTRS Intelligent Processor System includes 11 classic guitar simulations, 126 guitar effects, 40 drum grooves, 10 metronome variations, and an 80-second looper.



MOOER

BC Rich Warlock Extreme

BC Rich guitars have always stuck out of the crowd due to their uniqueness in design – however, these days, BC Rich guitars now also feature innovative upgrades and are factory optimised for speed and playability. Billed as a guitar designed by shredders – for shredders, **Nick Jennison** puts the BC Rich Warlock Extreme to the test.

ASK players from different generations what they think of when they hear “BC Rich”, and you’ll get very different answers. Millennials like myself will probably think of the dark period in the company’s history when the majority of their output was lacklustre, entry-level instruments for sweaty young men in Slipknot hoodies. But consult with the older crowd and they’re likely to remember the ultra-high-end custom shop designs played by the likes of Slash, Lita Ford and Joe Perry.

I have a big soft spot for the original purveyors of pointy guitars, and seeing such a unique and storied brand in the doldrums was heartbreaking. So when I heard at the 2020 NAMM show that BC Rich was under new ownership, I found myself desperately hoping they’d get back to what made those 70s/80s guitars so great. Well, if the new Warlock Extreme is anything to go by, BC Rich is back with a vengeance.

Gone are the tacky “horned” headstock, cheap hardware and plain, goopy poly finishes of yesteryear. In their place, we have premium Gotoh, Fishman and Floyd Rose appoint-

ments, a gorgeous matte white finish and gorgeous abalone binding. Yes, it’s an ostentatious

As you’d expect, this thing is solid as a rock and laughs in the face of even the most violent dives, flutters and warbles.

look, but it’s a BC Rich Warlock for crying out loud. And you know what? In this new livery with the old reverse headstock it actually looks fantastic.

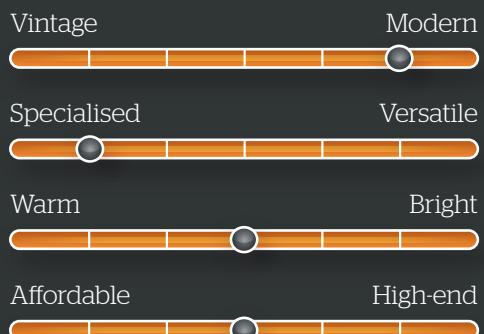
Another classic BC Rich feature I’m over the moon to see return is neck-through construction. While it’s not cheap to build guitars this way, it’s such a huge part of the look, feel and sound of those old guitars, and it’s on show »



BC Rich Warlock Extreme

MSRP: (UK) £1545 / (US) \$1499

The Breakdown



For fans of

Outrageous visuals.

Outrageous high gain tones.

Playing all of the notes.

For more information, please visit:

bcrich.com





here in all its naked glory. The satin-finished maple and wenge “Shredzilla” neck is an absolute dream for shreddy histrionics, but still has enough meat for laying down some vicious riffs. The factory action did leave a lot to be desired, but 30 seconds with an Allen key and we had the kind of action that’d make Shawn Lane blush, without a rattle or choke anywhere on the fretboard.

Tones are provided by a pair of Fishman Fluence Modern humbuckers, with a push-pull switch on the single volume control to switch between the “active” voice one and “passive” voice 2. While these pickups are hardly subtle, they’re incredibly articulate, punchy and juicy. The two voices are well balanced in

terms of output, with more attack, midrange focus and smoothness in voice one and more fatness, grit and character in voice 2. There are no coil splits to speak of, but there’s enough high-end extension in these pickups for a very convincing modern, clean sound. I do wish this guitar came with the rechargeable battery pack instead of relying on 9v batteries, but that’s a relatively small quibble. The push-button killswitch is a bit “extra”, but a lot of fun all the same!

There are few things more disappointing than a poor quality tremolo, and BC Rich has decided to save you this disappointment by fitting the Warlock Extreme with a 1000 series Floyd Rose. »

Gi

BC Rich Warlock Extreme



The BC Rich Warlock Extreme is a **triumphant return** to form for the storied brand.

As you'd expect, this thing is solid as a rock and laughs in the face of even the most violent dives, flutters and warbles. I tried pulling up a full major third; I tried diving the strings until they were slack; I could not put this guitar out of tune.

The BC Rich Warlock Extreme is a triumphant return to form for the storied brand. It's not subtle, it's not incredibly versatile, and it's definitely not appropriate for play-

ing weddings on the weekend. What it IS is a killer sounding hard rock and metal guitar that oozes quality and looks like something from a childhood "rock star" fantasy. If you're self-assured enough to play a guitar like this (and you've got the chops to back it up), this guitar is a riot.

END «



GOOD TO GO

WHENEVER • WHEREVER



A passion for playing means that inspiration can strike anytime, anywhere. With Elixir® Strings you know that when you pick up your guitar it's going to sound great—time and time again. That's because our featherweight coating protects your strings from the elements, keeping corrosion away and allowing your tone to sound great for longer, in any environment.



Elixir Strings. Performance-ready with long-lasting tone.

GORE

GORE, Together, improving life, ELIXIR, NANOWEB, POLYWEB, OPTIWEB, GREAT TONE • LONG LIFE, "e" icon, and designs are trademarks of W. L. Gore & Associates. ©2009-2021 W. L. Gore & Associates, Inc.

Bobcat V90

The Bobcat V90 is a semi-hollow body guitar that features soapbar pickups. It has a vintage-inspired design that mostly stays true to the original Italian-made guitars but features some modern improvements. Here is **Nick Jennison** with the full review of the VOX Bobcat V90.

IF I said “1960s Vox” to you, you’d be forgiven for thinking I was talking about an AC30 or another of Vox’s legendary guitar amplifiers. Perhaps less well known - but no less important - are Vox’s 1960s guitars. Their semi-hollow Bobcat and Lynx models were hugely popular among the “British Invasion” bands of the era, with lines that were very similar to Gibson’s ES335.

Well, what’s old is new again, and the Bobcat is back for 2021. Available in both the three-single-coil-equipped S66 (reviewed in a previous edition of *Guitar Interactive Magazine*) and two-P90-loaded V90 models, these guitars are very true to their ‘60s predecessors, but with all of the benefits of modern production methods.

The Bobcat V90 has the same classic silhouette, large headstock logo and block inlays as the original, but with a set neck construction rather than the bolt-on neck join of the older models - much more fitting for a guitar of this style, I’m sure you’ll agree. It sports a maple ply body with a large spruce centre block, a mahogany neck and a very attractive ebony fretboard. Interestingly, it has a 25" scale - slightly longer than the Gibson guitars that inspired the original models.

Electronics come courtesy of two Vox soapbar P90 pickups, with the familiar two volume/two-tone/three-way toggle control layout you’d expect of this type of guitar, with a very attractive set of vintage-correct metal knobs that feel very nice indeed. The pickups themselves are vintage voiced with tons of honk »

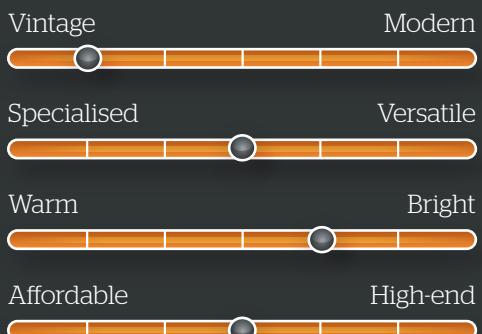
The Vox Bobcat V90 has all of the best parts of a classic mid-‘60s hollowbody, **but with none** of the drawbacks...”



VOX Bobcat V90

MSRP: (UK) £1279 / (US) \$1399

The Breakdown



For fans of

Classic mid-'60s looks.

Modern playability.

P90 honk and growl.

For more information, please visit:

voxamps.com



and character. They're ideal for Lennon-Esque jangle, bluesy sting or classic rock grind, and if you can tolerate a little hum, they actually perform very well for higher gain styles too.

In terms of playability, the Bobcat V90 is every inch of a modern guitar. The fit and finish are excellent, and the fretwork is immaculate - definitely not something we can say about most guitars from the mid-'60s! The result is a very comfortable action, paired with a neck that's slim enough for rapid fretwork but still meaty enough for grabbing thumb-over chords if that's your bag. Another notable upgrade compared to the original guitars

is the hardware. The despite their cool vintage looks, the small oval-buttoned tuners are rock solid, as is the tune-o-magic style bridge. The floating tailpiece is an elegant addition and adds a metallic airiness to the tone. Bigsby models are available too!

The Vox Bobcat V90 has all of the best parts of a classic mid-'60s hollowbody, but with none of the drawbacks. It's aesthetically and sonically true to the original models, but with the benefit of modern playability and reliability. What's not to love?

END ▶

A black and white photograph of a man with a beard and long hair playing a white Vox Bobcat V90 electric guitar. He is wearing a dark t-shirt and jeans. The guitar has a distinctive white pickguard and a black body. A play button icon is overlaid on the center of the image. In the top left corner, there is a logo consisting of the letters 'Gi' in a stylized font. At the bottom of the image, the text 'Bobcat V90' is displayed in a bold, orange font.

Bobcat V90



Vintage 25th Anniversary VS6 Edit

Based on the popular Vintage VS6—the gorgeous VS6SVB is built on a solid foundation of classic Vintage craftsmanship and aesthetics, time-tested Wilkinson hardware and hand-picked tonewoods. With a stunningly striking and rare two-tone Silver Burst finish, the Vintage 25th Anniversary Series limited edition, celebrates a milestone in the company's history. Here's **Nick Jennison** to tell us more.

MUCH discussion has been had about how old a guitar has to be considered "vintage". While it's hard to put an exact number on this, I've heard some suggest that 25 years is the threshold. Well, if that's the case then there are Vintage brand instruments out there that could be considered "vintage Vintage guitars". Yes, Vintage (with a capital V) guitars are celebrating their 25th anniversary, and what better way to celebrate a silver anniversary than a range of gorgeous silverburst guitars!

In case you aren't familiar, Vintage guitars are the brainchild of British designer and straight-up genius Trev Wilkinson. They're

some of the most affordable guitars on the market, but they're also some of the best designed and constructed instruments out there, brimming with player-friendly modifications and optimisations. The SG-inspired VS6 is a fine example of this, taking a well-loved but flawed design and keeping the good stuff while tweaking away the bad.

The first thing that will catch your attention is the offset body shape. Aside from just looking cool, this shape improves upper fret access and reduces neck dive (something that plagues traditional SG-shaped guitar) by increasing the mass in the lower rear bout. Right away, this guitar feels very comfortable on either leg, or on a strap. »

In terms of playability, the VS6 is **predictably**

ion 2

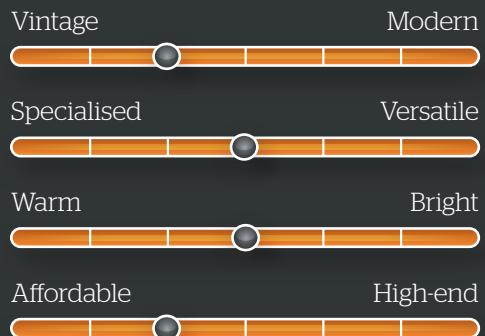
great..."



Vintage 25th Anniversary VS6 Edition 2

MSRP: (UK) £TBC / (US) \$TBC

The Breakdown



For fans of

Powerful humbucker tones.

Easy playability.

That classic silverburst look.

For more information, please visit:

vintageguitarsus.com



In terms of playability, the VS6 is predictably great. The factory setup is a little stiff for my liking, but 30 seconds with a screwdriver later and this guitar was playing with the greatest of ease. The neck is slim and comfortable, and the fretwork is flawless with no chokes, rattles or dead spots. Big bends and rapid shreddy passages feel effortless, but if you like a bit more fight then it's easy to get that feel too.

Wilkinson hardware is some of the best in the world, and this is evidenced by the rock-solid bridge and tailpiece on the VS6. Combined with the Grover Rotomatic tuners, the tuning stability on the VS6 is flawless, even with the most histrionic of playing styles.

Tones come courtesy of a pair of Wilkinson zebra humbuckers, and while I'm not completely sold on the look of the cream against the silverburst finish, these pickups really »



Vintage 25th Anniversary VS6 Edition 2

SE[®]

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

The PRS SE Hollowbody II Piezo provide musicians with the versatility of wielding both acoustic and electrics tones in one instrument. It's designed with two discrete volume controls (magnetics and piezo) that can be run to the same amp with one cable – players can use the volume controls to blend the pickups. Or, you can run two cables and have the magnetic pickups go to your favorite amp while running the piezo signal straight to the board for a huge sound. To find out more and to hear how versatile this guitar is, go to www.prsguitars.com.



© 2020 PRS Guitars. Photos by Marc Quigley

PRS
PAUL REED
SMITH
GUITARS

75TH
ANNIVERSARY

If you **want a great example** of the “other” two humbucker guitar without breaking the bank, look no further than the Vintage VS6...”

deliver where it counts. It’s common for pickups to be a bit of a let down on more affordable guitars, but that’s absolutely not the case here. These humbuckers are rich, dynamic and full of throaty character. There’s plenty of output for more aggressive styles of playing, but with enough balance and sparkle for cleaner tones, especially in the neck and middle positions.

Of course, we’d be remiss not to talk about the finish on this guitar. Silverburst is one of my favourite finishes, and it can be notoriously hard to do convincingly. Vintage has done a great job here, with a smooth and even burst and a silver that’s lustrous without looking gaudy or tacky.

If you want a great example of the “other” two humbucker guitar without breaking the bank, look no further than the Vintage VS6. It plays great, sounds fantastic, and the 25th-anniversary silverburst finish is the icing on the cake.

END «



Cort G280 Select

The new Cort G280 Select is a revamped follow up of the previously popular G280DX model, with newly added pearloid pickguard, Rosewood fingerboard—and Voiced Tone VTH-77 hot humbucker with a metal cover for that high-grade boutique looks and solid build quality. Designed with the best possible playability and sonic performance in mind, the G280 Select comprises of Alder body with Flame Maple top and HSS pickup configuration. **Sam Bell** tells us more.

I'VE always been impressed with Cort; since playing a friends Cort at a rehearsal back in 2005, I couldn't believe such a guitar could be available at such an affordable price. It just blew my mind. In this review, I have the pleasure of taking a look at the G280 Select; this is a modern HSS configuration S-Type Guitar with lots of high-quality features for the modern player, looking for a guitar to bridge the gap between different genres. Let's dive into the features.

The Cort G280 Select comes in two colours, Amber and Transparent Black. In the review, I had the pleasure of playing both and I'm undecided which was my favourite.

However, the aesthetic of the guitar is pleasing. The alder body is complimented with a flamed maple top; the sleek design of the body where the arm comes over the bridge is unique to this design; it looks and feels great.

The neck is a modern compound radius, going from 12 inches to 16 inches higher up the neck, making chordal work in the lower regions of the neck much more natural, and in the higher ranges, the fretboard keeps out the way for the bigger bends and legato techniques you might employ. We have a classic scale length of 25.5 inches, this is what is to be expected from S-Type guitars, and we have 22 frets. Cort's website doesn't list the exact type of frets, but in my opinion, they

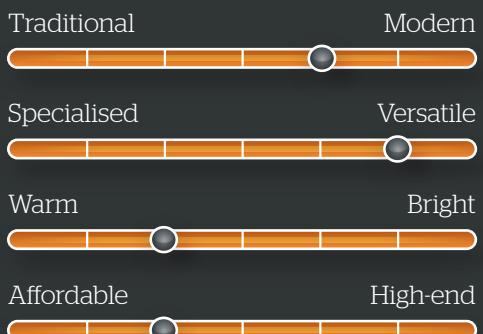
“Playability wise, **this guitar shreds**. It’s super easy to play, and it’s reasonably balanced on the leg and weight wise...”



Cort G280 Select

MSRP: (UK) £579 / (US) \$850

The Breakdown



For fans of

Tremendous versatility.

Boutique looks at an
affordable price.

For more information, please visit:

cortguitars.com

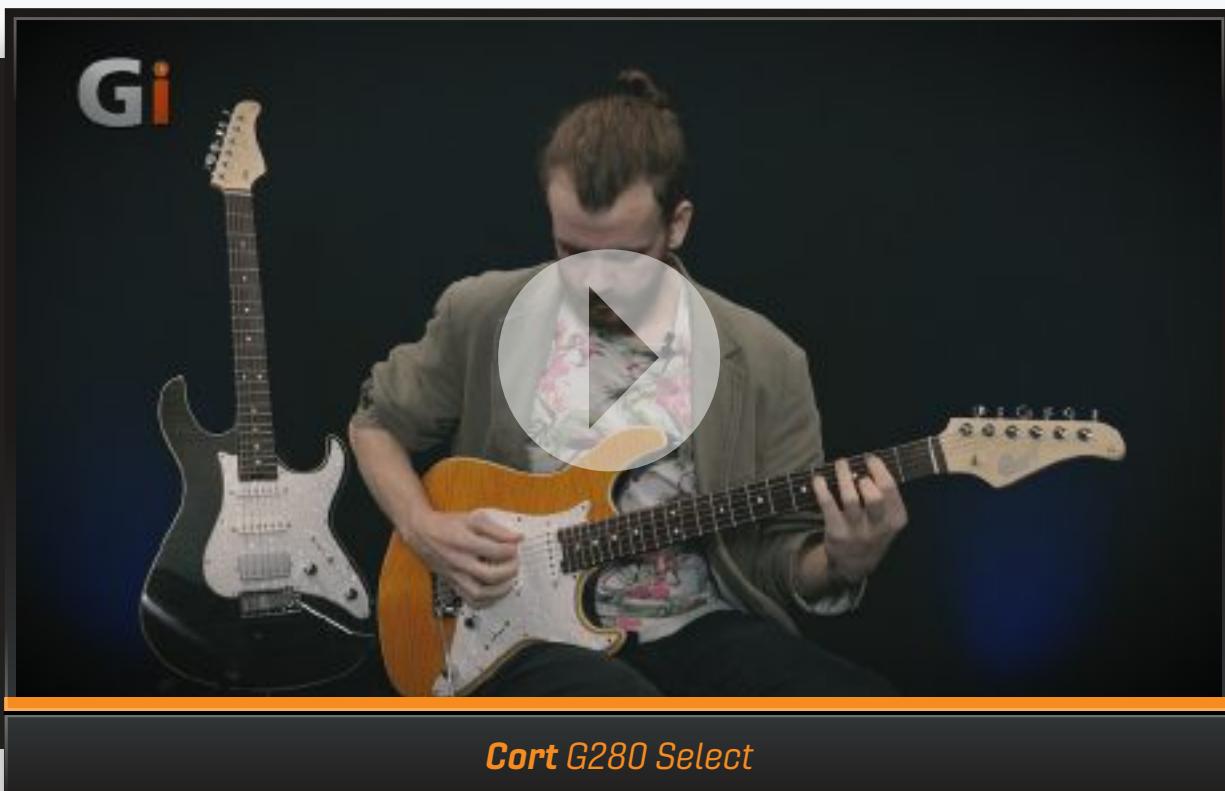


are tall and medium. Very easy to play! They go great with the Rosewood fingerboard and the Canadian hard maple neck, which glides very easily behind the thumb.

Hardware-wise we have Cort's staggered locking tuners; the lower string posts are taller than the » upper string posts; this helps with intonation and tuning stability. We also have a really responsive CFA-III Tremolo system made by Cort, which gives us the ability to raise and lower pitch with the push-in whammy bar. Even subtle movements give a nice shim-

mer vibrato to chords and single notes.

Electronics, we have Corts own voiced tone VTS63 single coils in the neck and middle position, these sound great in the split positions particularly, however, the neck pick up is quite dark for a single coil, however, it had a lot of punch and clarity despite this. The bridge pick up is the VTH77; this is a very hot humbucking pickup, good tight low end/lower mids. Great for rock and metal styles. These are controlled with a classic 5-way switch, volume and tone control.



Cort G280 Select





“Definity check the G280 Select series out. **I'd be happy** to take this to a gig with me for sure!“

Playability wise, this guitar shreds. It's super easy to play, and it's reasonably balanced on the leg and weight wise. I had no playing issues with it myself when testing it out, this guitar is designed for ease of use, and it delivers in every aspect of that. Looks-wise, I personally think this is a great looking guitar, especially for the price point; it feels of good quality. And of course, in terms of construction and hardware, it's very good! Definitely,



something that could be gigged with, taken into a studio and used for various applications. I can certainly imagine players who are looking for a versatile workhorse guitar on a budget; they should Definity check the G280 Select series out. I'd be happy to take this to a gig with me for sure!

END»

IF IT DOESN'T HAVE SANSAMP™ IT'S NOT A FLY RIG®



Fly Rig 5 v2



Richie Kotzen
RK5
Signature
Fly Rig v2



Paul Landers
PL1
Signature
Fly Rig



Acoustic/
Electric
Fly Rig



NEW!!!
BASS
FLY RIG
v2

Not just multi-effects pedals, each Fly Rig embodies an entire, multi-application "rig." They are travel-friendly solutions armed with sweet analog SansAmp tones and expressive combinations you can use for any gig --without mystery backline paranoia. Run directly into mixers of recording desks and PA systems, as well as augment your existing amplifier set-up. Around the corner or across the globe, rule the road with a Tech 21 Fly Rig.

TECH 21

Analog Brilliance™
tech21nyc.com

PRS Archon 50

Following in the footsteps of its predecessors, the second version of PRS's coveted Archon 50 has delivered a guitar amp packed with saturated distortion that today's modern metal guitarists crave. Its 50-watt design can be cranked up to 100w, and it features two channels, each with its own master volume control, allowing you to dial in your sound at room levels, with master volumes on each channel to find the perfect level without affecting the other.

AMONGST

high gain enthusiasts (like myself), the PRS Archon is rightly held in high esteem. Sitting somewhere between the two sonic "poles" of heavy guitar tone - the 5150 and the Dual Rectifier - but with perhaps a dash of Uberschall thrown in for good measure, its ferocious mid-focussed grind has found favour with metal guitar luminaries like Mark Tremonti, Jeff Loomis, Mark Holcomb and Jason Richardson.

"On to the sounds then, and the Archon 50 **absolutely does not disappoint** in this regard..."

You may be wondering, "if this amp is that good, how come it's not more popular then?". Well, as with all things PRS, quality comes with a price. For the 100w model with the flamed maple front panel, you wouldn't even get enough change out of £2000 to buy a beer, and the 50w model wasn't much cheaper. I say "wasn't" because these models have been discontinued for a while, so even if you could afford the hefty price tag, getting hold of one would be a challenge in itself.



hon 50 tube amplifier delivers the full spectrum conjures unabated sonic fury at bedroom and headfeting your tone. **Nick Jennison** Reviews

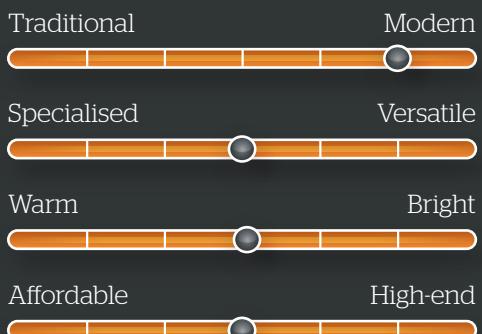
Enter the re-issued Archon 50. It's essentially the same amp as its predecessor, but you can pick one up for less than a grand. I know! It's nuts! If your first thought is, "well, it can't possibly be as good as the original for that price", I'd encourage you to check out some of the detailed comparisons of the old and new models online. There's literally no difference. »



PRS Archon 50

MSRP: From £995

The Breakdown



For fans of

World-class high gain tones.

Huge, expansive cleans.

Bargains.

For more information, please visit:

prsguitars.com



So what are we dealing with here? Well, the Archon 50 is a two channel, 50w amp available in both head and 1x12 combo formats - the inner workings of the amp are the same in both. Each channel sports a “volume” (read: gain) control, master volume, three-band EQ and bright switch, along with a shared presence and depth control. Power comes courtesy of a pair of 6CA7 power valves, with no less than SIX ECC83s in the preamp section for a frankly insane amount of gain.



PRS Archon 50



Channel switching comes courtesy of a single TS footswitch, and thankfully PRS has done away with the custom DIN socket found on previous models. This not only means that if you lose the original footswitch you can replace it with any standard one-button footswitch, but it also means you can control the amp from your G3/ES-8/Helix etc, without having to use a custom cable. While I wish the bright switch was foot-switchable, too, this is a huge step in the right direction, in my opinion.

On to the sounds then, and the Archon 50 absolutely does not disappoint in this regard. The clean channel is broad, open and expansive with great note separation and a nice touch of compression, making for a really pleasant playing experience. Often these “cleaner than clean” sounds can feel a little stiff and anaemic, but not here. Flip on the bright switch, and you’re presented with some beautiful »

“So yes, **the Archon is back**, and the new model is just as outrageously good as the originals...”

high-end sparkle, but there isn't a huge gulf between the “bright” and “normal” sounds like you often find on older Fender amps. Each setting is beautifully balanced and works well with a variety of drive pedals. To be honest, the amp is worth the price for the clean channel alone.

The lead channel, by contrast, is positively furious. When I say there's a LOT of gain, that's not an understatement. In fact, I'm struggling to think of an amp with more distortion on tap. It's enough to take a low output single-coil pickup (like the Silver Sky featured in the video that accompanies this review) and turn it into an all-out, thickly saturated modern metal tone. Crucially however, even with the gain dimed and more filth than you could ever conceive of using, the Archon 50 remains tight, focussed and easy on the ears. With the bright switch disengaged, the tone is thick and buttery smooth with an incredible har-

monic sustain, but flipping the bright switch on will reward you with a massively articulate and touch-responsive sound that cuts like a laser beam, but never sounds harsh or fatiguing even at extreme gain levels.

Interestingly, the combo version of the Archon 50 comes loaded with a Celestion V-Type as opposed to the industry standard Vintage 30s (like the ones in our studio 4x12). This does somewhat soften the attack of the amp's dirty channel and bring it into more “old school” territory, but for my money, the real magic happens when you run this amp through a larger, closed-back cab.

So yes, the Archon is back, and the new model is just as outrageously good as the originals - except now it's much easier to fit into your budget. If you're into high gain tones, you need this amp in your arsenal.

END»

Learn More at
cortguitars.com



G290 FAT

FAT TONE
FEATURE
PACKED

Cort[®]
since 1960

440

440 DISTRIBUTION

440distribution.com

Vox Mini Go Series 10 Watt + VSF3 F

The Vox Mini Go 10 is a portable modelling guitar amplifier designed for travel and on-the-go music working events. It's targeted at artists that do small events like coffee shops, outdoor busking, or any small-scale events where portability without sacrificing options are the target. The amp models used to define the sound of the VOX MINI GO series use the "VET" modelling technology used on the VOX Cambridge50, which offers a realistic and responsive sound. **Rodney McG** tells us more.

THE main feature of the amp is its numerous profiles offering multiple clean, crunch, and high-gain amp sound to fit nearly any situation in any genre. Of course, with it being from Vox, the legendary AC 30 amp is included in the models. Surprising, there are also a number of emulations that are an obvious tip of the hat to Hi-gain favourites like the JCM 800, and Mesa dual rectifier.

Multiple sound sources can be added into the mix along with the standard instrument input. There is a mic input allowing accompaniment by voice, or add another performer, as well as an auxiliary input for playing other backing tracks and sound sources.

Along with the models, there are two different sets of effects. The first is a Delay and Reverb section. The second is a modulation effect section with

chorus, phaser, tremolo, and an octave emulator on top. By moving the dial through the labelled section of the effect, you can create stronger or less present versions of the effect without having to use separate dials or edit menus. This is a welcome feature, especially when you have to make adjustments to sound in real-time.

One knob controls not only your effect choice but how strongly the effect is applied to your signal.

Also included is a drum machine/rhythm section with multiple patterns in genres covering everything from Rock, Metal, and Pop, to Blues, Latin, and R & B.

Each section comes with a few variations of beats in that style selectable by pressing the variation button underneath the selector dial. »



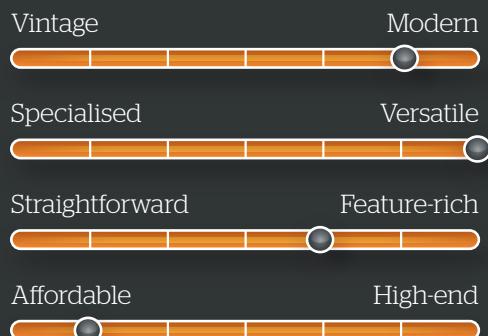
Footswitch



Vox Mini Go Series 10 Watt + VSF3 Footswitch

MSRP: (UK) £219 / (US) \$382

The Breakdown



For fans of

- Great tones in a lightweight format.
- Tons of options.
- Value for money.

For more information, please visit:

voxamps.com



“The VOX MINI GO 10 guitar amp can be **taken with you anywhere** you go...”

The other major feature is a Looper. This allows you to record one performance and have it playback while you create another one on top. By using the onboard drum machine and the Looper, a single performer could create a full track with drums, guitar, and bass, or drums a rhythm line and a platform to solo over. The Looper function can be set and accessed by the top of the unit, but also by the use of the three-button VFS3 footswitch for easy use in a live improv type of situation.



Vox Mini Go Series 10 Watt + VSF3 Footswitch



The VOX MINI GO 10 guitar amp can be taken with you anywhere you go, letting you enjoy playing anywhere, whether at home, on the street or in a concert venue. To make the unit truly portable, it can be run by a standard AC power plug, as well as a portable battery. It uses the standard portable battery size you can find easily available. »



Vox seems to have left no stone unturned in creating a portable unit that provides enough options for a single performer to create an ensemble performance or multiple performers and backup tracks to be used on the fly in any applicable live situation.

END <

BLUE STEEL

THERE'S FIRE
IN THIS ICE

CRYOGENICALLY FROZEN

BRILLIANT TONE

LONG LASTING

Dean Markley
#WELLSTRUNG



Don't wait any longer....

SUBSCRIBE FOR FREE!

go to

www.guitarinteractivemagazine.com/subscribe
and sign up today!



Mooer Audio X2 Series R7 Reverb

The R7 X2 Reverb combines MOOER's best digital effects algorithms from the A7 Ambi series into one ultimate pedal. Parameter knobs control the EQ and Decay and Pre-Delay knobs for adjusting the intensity of each effect. Unique Trail-on functions to customize how each effect fades out. Here's **Nick Jennison** with his thoughts.

THERE

are really two “schools” of delay user in my experience. There’s the first camp, who just want a little bit of “space” in their tone with the least possible level of fuss: the kind of player who buys a Carbon Copy or a DD3 and never looks back, happy that they’ll never have to delve through a menu, save and recall a preset or (heaven forbid) figure out how MIDI works.

Then there’s the second camp: the players who thrive on options and tweakability, who draw on their gear for inspiration, producing grand ethereal soundscapes and textures that go way beyond what we typically think of as “guitar sound”. It’s this second group of players that Mooer have in their sights with the D7 X2.

In a previous edition of *Guitar Interactive Magazine*, we took a look at the D7 - a mini-pedal format “ambient delay” that boasted a whole host of outlandish delay types in a tiny pink package. The D7 X2 is its bigger sibling, with twice as many delay types ranging from the positively conserva-

tive digital, analogue and tape delays we’re all used to hearing through to otherworldly modulated, pitch-shifted and bit-crushed repeats. It also offers stereo I/O for maximum spaciousness and compatibility with both stereo effects pedals and with other instruments like synths, drum machines, or even as studio outboard.

Other notable new features include a dedicated tap tempo switch, along with a preset scrolling mode that allows you to switch delay types mid-performance without having to take your hands off the guitar.

In terms of sounds, we could be here literally all day talking about the 14 delay modes included in this powerful little pedal, so it’s probably best you watch the video for a full run-down of every preset. What does separate this pedal from the original D7, however is the inclusion of five more “normal” delay types - namely “digital”, “tape”, “analogue”, “ping pong”, and “dynamic”. This means the D7 X2 is a fine choice for players who want a range of delay sounds but aren’t heavily into the ambient “thing”. »

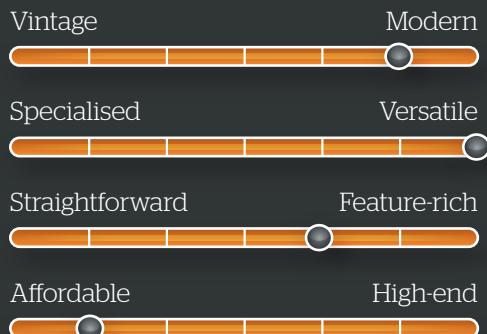
iance and R7 Reverb pedals and combines 14 include High Cut, Low Cut, and Mix for adjusting features of the R7 X2 include the Infinite and the full review.



Mooer Audio X2 Series R7 Reverb

MSRP: (UK) £169 / (US) \$TBC

The Breakdown



For fans of

- Highly tweakable delay sounds.
- Ethereal soundscapes.
- Great sounding “normal” delays.

For more information, please visit:
mooeraudio.com



Beyond that, things get progressively more whacked-out, ranging from beautifully modulated echos to the bizarre-sounding “rainbow” and “liquid” modes.

Here's another consideration for those looking to get into the world of luxurious, outlandish sounding delays: the price. Compared to the industry standard multi-delay units, the Mooer D7 X2 is less than a quarter of the price - barely scratching three figures at some outlets here in the UK. If you're just wanting to dip your toe into this type of delay pedal, it's really hard to go wrong with the D7 X2 at that price.

A close-up photograph of the Mooer Audio X2 Series R7 Reverb guitar effects pedal. The pedal is light purple with black knobs and switches. It features a central blue LED button labeled 'PRE-Delay'. To its left is a silver footswitch with 'MOOER' printed on it. Above the switch are two small buttons: one labeled 'NOISE' and another labeled 'BYPASS'. To the right of the central LED are four black knobs labeled 'REVERB', 'TREBLE', 'MID', and 'BASS'. The top edge of the pedal has the text 'Mooer X2 Series R7 Reverb'. In the top left corner of the image, there is a small 'Gi' logo. In the center of the image, there is a large white play button icon.

Mooer Audio X2 Series R7 Reverb



The Mooer D7 X2 is a hugely powerful and versatile delay pedal for very little money. With tap tempo, 14 presets, and stereo I/O, it's well equipped to fit on any guitar player's board. Whether you're into 40-minute ambient guitar meditations, or you just want a bit of slap-back behind your solo, this pedal has you covered.

END <<

Eventide TriceraChorus Pedal

The TriceraChorus pedal from Eventide is a vintage-inspired tri-chorus stompbox that you crave for your guitar, bass, synth, strings, vocals, and beyond. Engineered with Eventide's MicroPitch detuning, the TriceraChorus offers a watery, customizable chorus so

EVENTIDE

is the masters of taking a relatively simple concept and throwing the entire kitchen sink at it: offering players every option for tonal tweaker they could possibly want and several they didn't know they wanted. This is probably most evident in their flagship "do it all" H9, but no less apparent in their deliciously deep "single effect" pedals like the Ultratap, MicroPitch and Black Hole.

But surely a chorus pedal can't be that deep, right? Well, dear reader, if you thought Eventide was going to give you a sky blue box with speed and depth knobs, you haven't been paying attention. Inspired by classic '70s and '80s rack units, the Tricerachorus has no less than three separate chorus - one on the left, one on the right, one up the middle. With chorus, vibrato and chorale voices, a separate detune effect and an extra chewy "swirl" mode, the possibilities with this pedal are endless.

Despite all of this complexity, the controls on the Tricerachorus are very intuitive indeed. You have master mix and rate controls (the former doubling as a "mode" control), a separate mix control for the detune effect, and individual depth controls for the left, centre and right channels. If you want to go deeper, you can access another level of tweakery with the alternate control functions, activated with the dedicated button next to the detune knob. »

The Eventide TriceraChorus sounds like a vintage sounding chorus, but it's also way, way



it delivers all of the syrupy-smooth deep modulation rich bucket brigade-style chorusing and Eventide sound like no other. **Nick Jennison** tells us more.

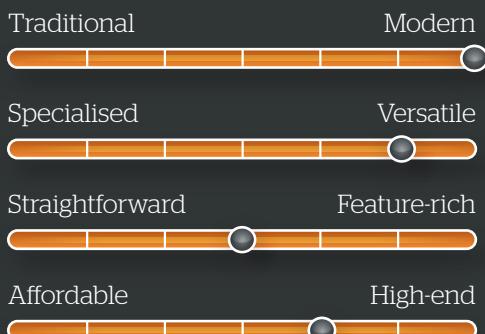
cerachorus is a killer vibrato and detune pedal,
way more than that...”



Eventide TriceraChorus Pedal

MSRP: (UK) £299 / (US) \$299

The Breakdown



For fans of

Classic tri-chorus sounds.

Swirly modulation effects.

Limitless options.

For more information, please visit:
eventideaudio.com



If you have a specific sound in mind, it's really easy to dial it in, but it's much more rewarding to just get stuck in and start turning knobs.

Once you have your perfect wobble dialled in, you can save your settings to one of five preset slots, which you can easily recall with the right footswitch, or even via MIDI if that's your bag. You can also connect an expression pedal which will allow you to "morph" between two different settings in a single preset.

If you're looking for the absolute deepest and most expansive modulation sounds, you're go-

ing to want to check out the "swirl" function. Activated with the right footswitch, this mode adds a chewy, phase-shifted throb to your tone that reminds me of 2000s era Incubus. It's a very addictive sound, and having that extra "gear" of modulation available at the tap of a footswitch is very cool.

The Eventide Tricerachorus is a killer sounding chorus, vibrato and detune pedal, but it's also way, way more than that. If you're not afraid to get in and start tweaking, you'll be rewarded with some of the lushest, swirliest modulation you've ever heard.

END ▶



Eventide Tricerachorus Pedal

WANT TO FEATURE IN THE NEXT GUITAR INTERACTIVE?



IT'S SIMPLE. TO ADVERTISE...

**Get in touch with our sales team and let them
help you book your advert.**

Helen - UK AND EUROPE.

helen@guitarinteractivemagazine.com

T: +44 (0)7803 726 012

Lisa - USA.

lispiteri@guitarinteractivemagazine.com

T: 973-610-0441

THE Quietroom

At **Guitar Interactive**, we pride ourselves on bringing you in-depth reviews and demonstrations for only the best products the world of guitar and audio electronics has to offer.

If it's in Gi, then it's gear we'd buy! All of our written reviews and breakdowns are accompanied by a detailed video – so you can see and hear for yourself if it's right for you.

Gi85

WHEN ONLY
ACOUSTIC WILL DO

RECOMMENDED PRODUCT
Gi
RECOMMENDED PRODUCT



Sheeran by Lowden S04

Based on the successful Lowden S (small) body, The Sheeran by Lowden S models deliver a surprisingly deep voice despite their size. Featuring a gorgeous Sitka Spruce top with Figured Walnut back and sides, the S-04 offers the kind of specs you just don't see on guitars in this price bracket.

Nick Jennison tells us more.

NORTHERN Irish guitar builders

Lowden are primarily known for their breathtaking high-end acoustics, designed and built by master luthier George Lowden. So it came as something of a surprise when Lowden announced their collaboration with Ed Sheeran to produce a range of more affordable instruments - built not in East Asia but in Ireland.

Naturally, Sheeran needs no introduction. He has lent his name to a number of very popular entry-level acoustic guitars over the years - usually smaller body models, like the two shapes on offer from Lowden - the parlour sized "W" (wee Lowden) and the slightly larger "S". Each of these shapes is available in four wood combinations, each with its own sonic signature.

The S04 features a Sitka spruce top over a beautifully figured walnut back and sides. Normally the preserve of high-end instruments, walnut is sonically somewhere in between koa and rosewood, with plenty of sparkly high end, but also a healthy midrange

punch. This, combined with the spruce top and ebony fretboard, makes for a guitar with a bright voice and loads of projection - ideal for loud stages and sitting in a dense mix.

The fit and finish of this guitar are excellent, with very tidy fretwork and a comfortable "player's action" right out of the box. It's common to find guitars at this price point set up with the kind of action height that makes anything past the open position a fight, but that's not the case here. This guitar is very comfortable to play right up into the upper reaches (thanks to its healthy cutaway) without sacrificing the boldness or clarity of its tone. Another very welcome feature is the forum bevel on the top - another premium appointment not often seen on guitars in this price range.

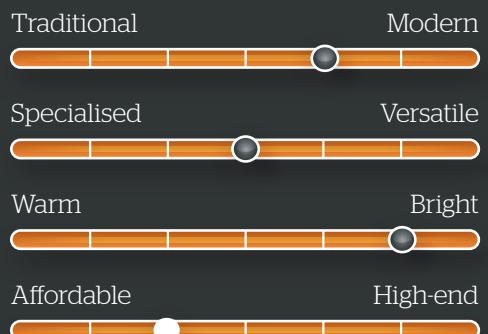
Aesthetically, the S04 is clean, modern and elegant, without the "signature-it's" that some of Ed Sheeran's previous signature models have suffered from. There are no gaudy logos, no huge signatures in weird places, just a subtle "Sheeran" on the peghead, and that's it. Even if you're not a massive fan of Sheeran as an »



Sheeran by Lowden SO4

MSRP: (UK) £965 / (US) \$1345

The Breakdown



For fans of

Bright, punchy tones.

Smaller body shapes.

Comfortable playability.

For more information, please visit:
sheeranguitars.com/guitars/the-s-series/



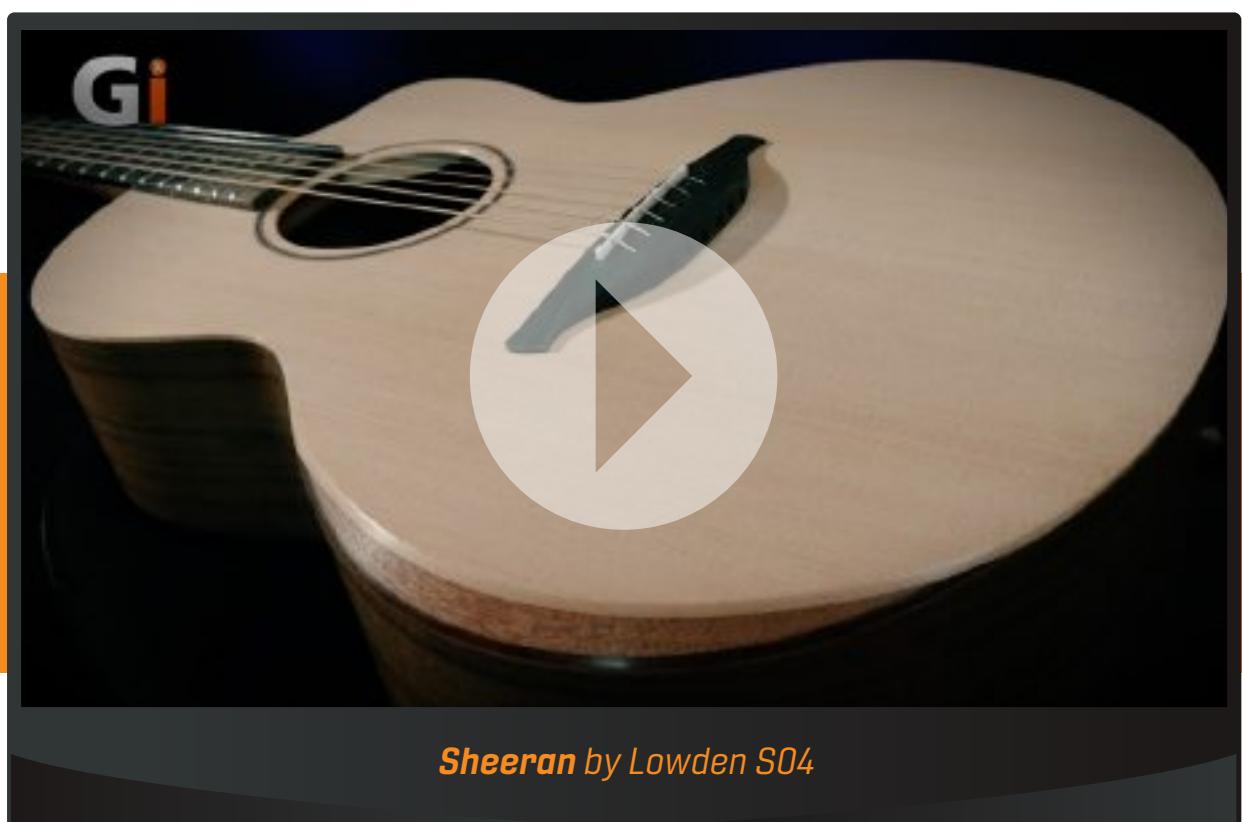
artist (or just don't like guitars with artist associations in general), you won't feel out of place playing one of these guitars.

Electronics come courtesy of an LR Baggs element system. It's a very natural sounding system, with pleasantly simple controls nested inside the guitar's soundhole. Regular readers will know that one of my pet peeves on acoustic guitars are elaborate preamps that require a huge hole to be cut out of the guitar's side. They look ugly, they add unnecessary weight, and they usually invite the guitarist to tweak away the natural sound of their guitar. I'm a big fan of minimalist systems like this one, but fewer controls mean

the core sound has to be "right". Fortunately, the plugged-in sound from this guitar is superb.

The Sheeran By Lowden S04 is a guitar that sounds great, plays great, and won't break the bank. If you want to get your hands on that legendary Lowden tone without paying big bucks, this is the guitar for you. If you're a songwriter looking for the perfect writing and performing instrument, this is also for you. If you're an Ed Sheeran fan, even better, but even if you're not, you should give this guitar some serious consideration.

END»



Sheeran by Lowden S04



New players on

Celebrity
Series

– News 2021

Check out the new designs.



the pitch.

GEWA

A BRAND OF
GEWA
GUITARS

[f/ ovationguitars](#)
[o/ ovationguitarsofficial](#)
[t/ theovationguitars](#)
[// ovationguitars.com](#)

Ovation
GUITARS

Guild Marley A-20

The Guild Limited Edition Bob Marley Signature A20 Dreadnought is a wonderful tribute to a man who left an incredible impression on music and the world. Modelled after Bob Marley's at home songwriting guitar, Guild has crafted an instrument that's full of heart and soul, a true must-have for any fan Bob Marley fan. **Nick Jennison** tells us more.

THERE'S no question that Bob

Marley was one of the greatest and most beloved songwriters of all time. His impact, both musically and culturally, was profound and resonates with music lovers around the world to this day. So what better way to honour his legacy than by recreating his favourite acoustic guitar.

Based on Marley's at-home songwriting guitar, the new Guild A-20 is a great sounding dreadnought at a very appealing price. The recipe is one that's stood the test of time - spruce top; mahogany neck, back and sides; 25.5" scale length; 14th fret neck join. It's a classic combination, and the A-20 is a fine example of this style of guitar.

Straight out of the box, the A-20 feels classy in a way that far exceeds its modest price. The satin finish feels great under the hand and adds a rich lustre to the mahogany back and sides. The open-gear tuners look fantastic, and the understated binding and rosette look beautiful without being gaudy. Despite this being a tribute guitar, it doesn't exhibit too much "signature-it is", with just a small Marley signature on the pickguard, an "M" logo on the truss rod cover and a golden lion logo inside the soundhole.

Sonically, the A-20 is very big and bold, with great forward projection and a nice balance across the frequency range. It comes set up with what I'd describe as a "strummer's action", with plenty of »

The Marley A-20 **is a fine tribute** to one of the great songwriters of our time..."



Guild A-20 Bob Marley Signature

MSRP: (UK) £359 / (US) \$399

The Breakdown

Traditional

Specialised

Warm

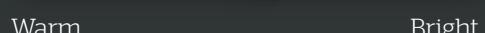
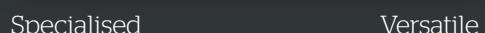
Affordable

Modern

Versatile

Bright

High-end



For fans of

Bold sounding dreadnoughts.

Environmentally conscious building practices.

The great man himself.

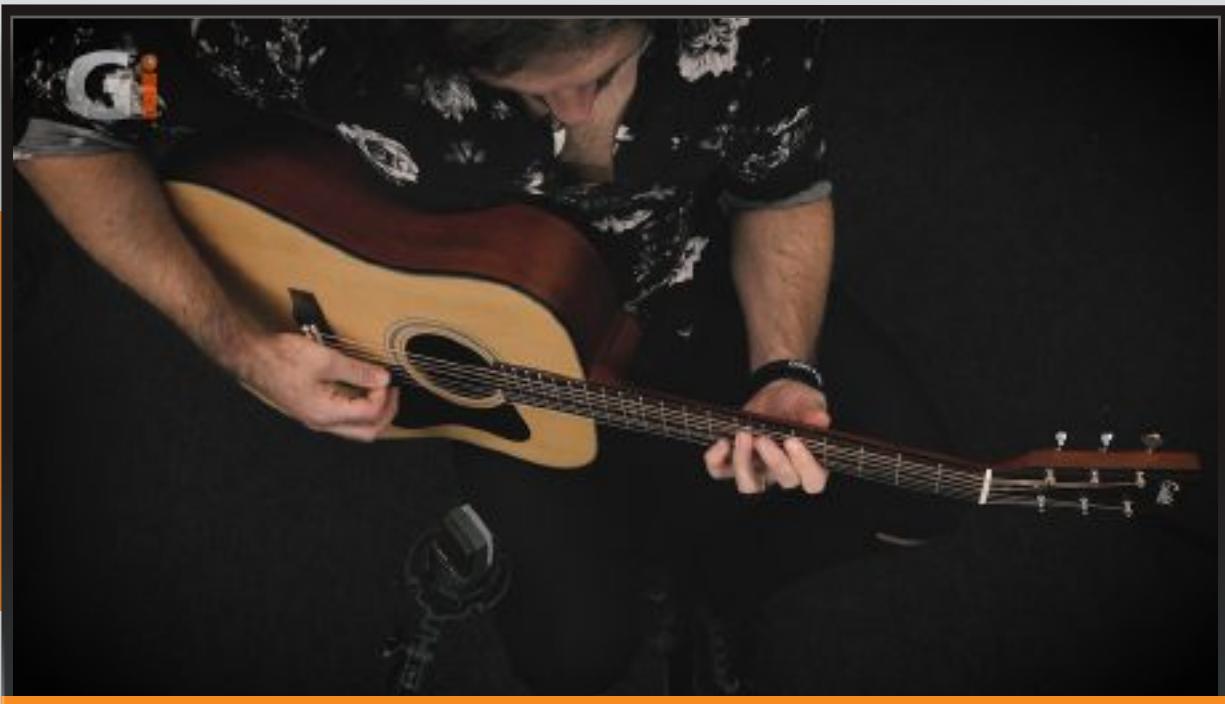
For more information, please visit:

cortguitars.com



clearance for aggressive chordal playing. That's not to say that more intricate playing styles don't sound great on this guitar, but your left hand might have to work a little harder to make complex fingerstyle and flat-picking passages work. That's the price you pay for a big, bold, strumming voice, though, and that's really where this guitar excels.





Guild Marley A-20

In keeping with Marley's environmentalist values, the A-20 makes use of sustainable building practices - both the guitar (with Guild pledging to plant a tree for every Marley A-20 they make) and the gig bag, which is made of recycled nylon. It comes with a bunch of cool accessories that commemorate Marley's life and works, and it retails at a price that puts it within reach of most players - empowering aspiring musicians to get their songs out into the

world without a huge financial barrier to entry.

The Marley A-20 is a fine tribute to one of the great songwriters of our time, and it's also a great sounding guitar for not a whole lot of money. Whether you're a Marley enthusiast, or just a guitar player looking for a killer affordable dreadnought, this guitar is definitely one to check out.

END <

Cordoba Friederich Luthier S

Billed as the marriage of peak instrument design and fine craftsmanship, hand-crafted by a team of elite luthiers in small batches—the Luthier Select series guitars bring new life to the designs that shaped the modern nylon string guitar. **Sam Bell** reviews the Cordoba Friederich Luthier Select.

IN this issue, I've been given the pleasure of checking the Cordoba Luthier Select Series, Friederich Model Traditional Classical Guitar.

Cordoba has been making guitars for over 15 years, specialising in nylon string instruments. Their focus has always been on building traditional instruments of high quality with a modern touch.

The Luthier Select series is Cordoba's homage to some of the Legendary Luthiers from around the world. The model I'm playing in this review is the Friederich model, aptly named after Daniel Friederich, who is one of the most respected and influential luthiers in the world. Based in France, his work has been heavily influenced by another legendary French Luthier Robert Bouchet.

The neck itself is also Rosewood, and it **feels solid and balanced** with the body of the guitar..."

Daniel made a name for himself as a Luthier by crafting beautifully designed instruments with intricate headstock carving and sound-hole rosettes. The Luthier Select 'Friederich' features these two signatures calling signs from Daniel's work. The sound of Friederich's instruments have been quoted as having a 'silky response' to playing dynamics, and it has been noted the sound carries in even large halls and arenas. The combination of craftsmanship and artistry has inspired many players to gravitate towards his instruments.

It's worth mentioning that this is a specialist instrument designed for the Classical Guitar connoisseur. There are no pre-amps or extra gizmo's; this is a purely traditional classical guitar; the focus is on the quality, playability, design and sound of the guitar. »

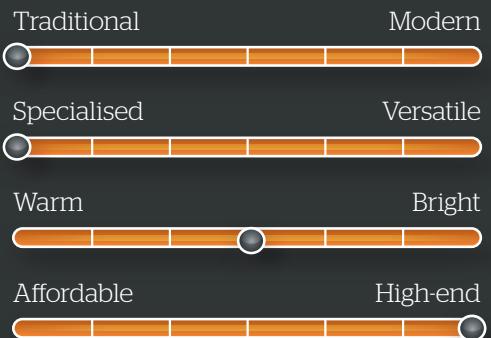
select



Cordoba Friederich
Luthier Select

MSRP: £3144 / (US) \$3099

The Breakdown



For fans of

Silky, responsive tones.

Powerful bass.

Distinctive carved headstock.

For more information, please visit:
cordobaguitars.com

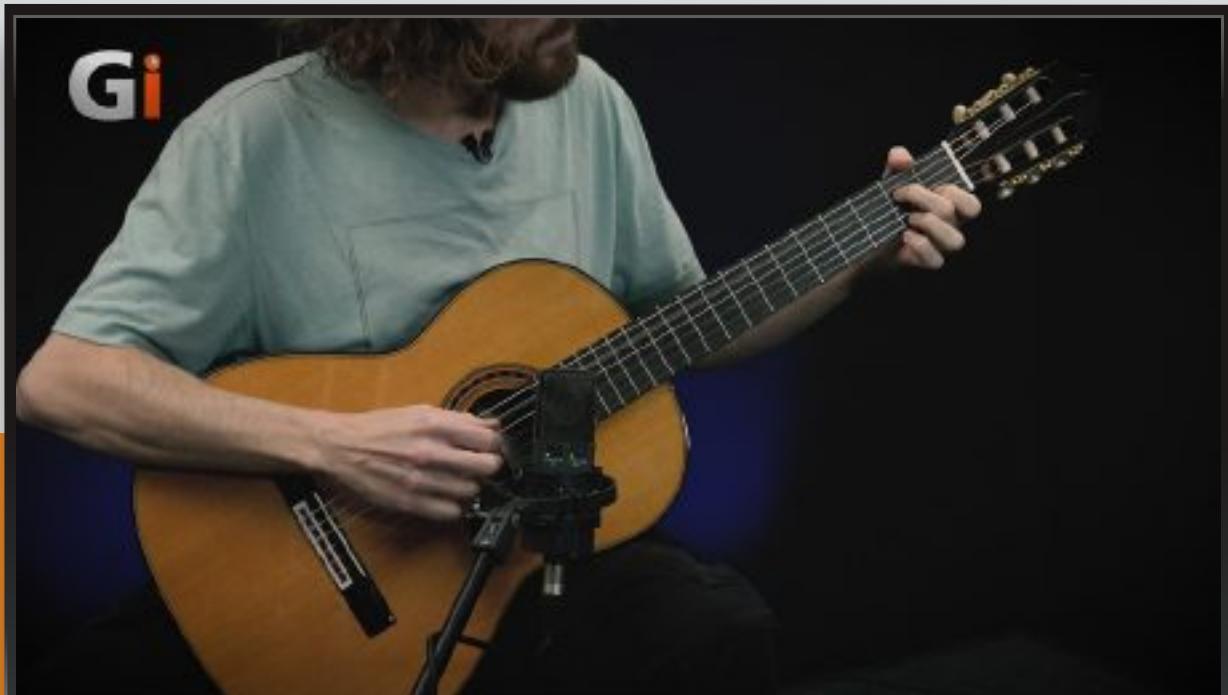


This guitar looks stunning; the fine wood grain looks beautiful, the detailed rosette around the soundhole, the signature carved headstock, the fretwork and binding. It may look like a regular classical guitar at a far distance, but in the flesh, it really pops. The body features a solid Canadian Cedar Top, which is supported by another Friederich sig-

nature feature, the bracing pattern below the top, built with had carved spruce branches. The Cedar Top is supported with Rosewood back and sides, giving the guitar a beautiful light, crisp and resonant sound.

The neck is super smooth, with no scratchy resistance or blemishes, really satisfying to





Cordoba Friederich Luthier Select

fret from the nut to the bridge. The neck itself is also Rosewood, and it feels solid and balanced with the body of the guitar.

The legendary ‘Silky’ Response, as quoted on Cordoba’s website, is no myth; the notes bloom from the guitar neck and resonate through the body in a very pleasing way. It’s at this stage I must admit that I’m not a seasoned fingerstyle player, so my soft fingertips and short fingernails aren’t going to give the ‘full’ sonic picture of what this instrument would sound like in the right hands; however, in the video portion of this review, I have

played fingerstyle and “pick style” to show various aspects of the tonal range. I hope this at least gives a broad outline of the capabilities of the guitar.

If you’re a Classical Guitar fanatic, specialist or an artist looking to find an instrument to inspire and you have the budget, the Cordoba Luthier Select’ Friederich’ is well worth checking out. It might be on the expensive side, but if you’re serious about traditional instruments, this is definitely a builder and instrument to consider. **END** «

Martin D-13E Road Series

The Martin D-13E is a take on their classic dreadnought formula with a few tweaks, part of their Road Series of guitars. New tonewoods, a refined design, and Fishman MX-T electronics offer a fresh take on the Martin dreadnought experience. **Rodney McG** reviews.

THE Martin Guitars acoustic Road Series looks to be designed around features optimal for the musician who travels and gigs often but doesn't want to sacrifice sound or suffer a high price point.

The construction is classic acoustic styling, with modern updates for the studio and stage. Starting with the spruce top, the guitar features a traditional looking tortoiseshell pickguard and binding on top and back of the body. For a more modern touch, the sides and back of the body are zircote, an exotic looking wood that has become popular in building more recently that has beautiful contrasting chocolate and black look.

Another interesting feature is the fact that while the body has a full gloss finish to it, the neck has a satin hand rub finish that feels smooth and fast under the hand.

Speaking of the neck, the profile fits a very comfortable medium C profile. It stands directly between a thin C that might be inappropriate for an acoustic, losing too much

mass and taking away some resonance, but without also having the large chunk of a fat C on some older acoustics that can make them uncomfortable to play, especially during wide chords or faster passages.

Finishing off the neck is a composite material fingerboard. I think this is one of the newer innovations that makes the guitar shine. While looking like a deep Rosewood in colour, it seems quite a bit more stable. Upon receiving the guitar and pulling it from the gig bag, it was perfectly in tune, and the neck was straight and without buzzing. Especially when travelling, the stability of the neck and fretwork can be a tough situation, moving through different climates and humidity levels. The composite fingerboard obviously helps with that. The fretwork was excellent right out of the box, with no buzzing, sharp edges, or fret sprout.

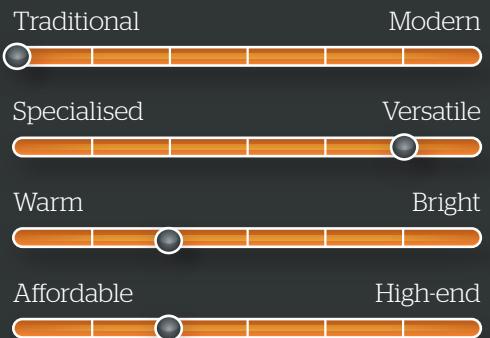
Another more modern feature is the Fishman MX-T electronics, which along with being a soundhole pickup, includes an upward-facing lighted tuner. »



Martin D-13E Road Series

MSRP: (UK) £1463 / (US) \$1299

The Breakdown



For fans of

- A rich tone with plenty of character.
- Comfortable playability.
- Dreadnought body shape.

For more information, please visit:

martinguitar.com





The tuner is easy to see at a distance and placed directly, so its best visibility is when you are looking down towards the soundhole. It's clearly lit, accurate, and can be turned on easily by pressing the activation button on the right-hand side of the soundhole. Activating the tuner also mutes the guitar pickup output making silent tuning a one-step process. The sound of the Fishman pickup is clear and a fairly uncoloured representation of the actual guitar tone. When I compared the DI to the sound of the guitar miked in the room, they were



very close to each other, so the pickup is definitely more about transparency than a separate sound of its own.

The overall sound of the guitar is clear and resonant, but without the booming low end, some full-depth acoustic guitars suffer from it. The boom of huge low end can be somewhat exciting at points but often costs in low-end definition and note articulation. The Martin is well balanced in this area offering good depth but maintaining

good balance and articulation across the total spectrum. The Martin Road Series would be at home equally on tour and on the road as well as in the studio. It comes standard with a quality, well-padded gig bag that is well cut and fitted to its shape. If you're in the market for a professional quality guitar that can stand up to the rigours of travel, they should be on your list.

END »

A photograph of a man with a beard and long hair, wearing a dark denim shirt, holding a light-colored Martin D-13E Road Series acoustic guitar. He is standing in a studio with a red patterned wall, a lamp, and various equipment in the background. The guitar has a traditional acoustic design with a visible sound hole and bridge. The image is framed by a thick orange border at the bottom.

Martin D-13E Road Series

THE Basement

At **Guitar Interactive**, we pride ourselves on bringing you in-depth reviews and demonstrations for only the best products the world of guitar and audio electronics has to offer.

If it's in Gi, then it's gear we'd buy! All of our written reviews and breakdowns are accompanied by a detailed video – so you can see and hear for yourself if it's right for you.

Sponsored by **Rotosound**



Gi85

THE PLACE
FOR BASS

RECOMMENDED PRODUCT
RECOMMENDED PRODUCT



Vintage VJ74SVB 25th Anniversary

With a stunningly striking and rare two-tone Silver Burst finish, the Vintage 25th Anniversary edition VJ74SVB 4-string bass guitar, celebrates a milestone in the company's history and its anniversary of guitar craftsmanship. **Dan Veall** Reviews

IN 2020, Vintage Guitars celebrated 25 years of being in production. Of course, 2020 had its own ideas, and thus we've had to wait a little while to get our hands on this fine specimen from the hands of one Trevor Wilkinson, legendary guitar brand designer.

Thankfully, patience has paid off and I am here to show you the Vintage VJ74SVB 25th Anniversary Jazz bass. My the festivities begin!

I'm going to cut to the chase and tell you the bass we have in the studio for review is splendid. Straight out of the included 25th Anniversary embroidered gig bag, it immediately feels like a quality instrument. The limited-edition two-tone silver burst finish highlights the anniversary range of guitars and basses, which sets it apart from other Vintage models produced. The bad news for you is that according to the Vintage website, only 100 of each anniversary model is going to be made. You'll

want to snap one up quickly!

The outline is of course, familiar. You'll want some finer details though, won't you?

It's US Alder wood for the body and this example feels reasonably light on my lap for this type of wood. Sorry, I tend not to bring scales with me to the studio, but I have most definitely had much heavier jazz basses adorning my leg in the past reviews. Alder is, of course, a great tonewood for solid-body instruments. You know this; I need to say no more! Overall, a balanced tone unplugged sets us off to a good start.

Looking at the hardware, the bridge, much like the tuning keys, is Wilkinson branded. I like that the bridge has four solid brass saddles. This model has a chrome baseplate in keeping with a vintage look, rather than using a modern high mass type.

Trevor Wilkinson's Wilkinson coil pickups have a clarity that's heard through the rig. I like the definition pickup that isn't at all. There are plenty of woody tones enjoyed when reaching a boost on your amplifier. You'd expect from a jazz volume and master tone video, I show off just the tones you can expect from this. Being single-coil, you're going to enjoy low notes with lots of glass. However you could possibly hear noise on stages, lights and electronic components normal for any single-coil or humbucking combination.

A real delight here is the profile of the neck on this. You might be forgiven for thinking a higher-priced instrument has a one-piece maple neck profile for me, not de-

y

ary Series limited
s in honour of its 25th

VJB single-
ear voice to
my reference
on in the bridge
l brittle. There
ones to be
ng for the mid
ier. Controls, as
azz, are volume,
one. In the
some of the
from a bass like
l pickups, you
ely chiming
ssy overtones.
ick up mains
with lots of
devices. This is
-coil when out
figuration.

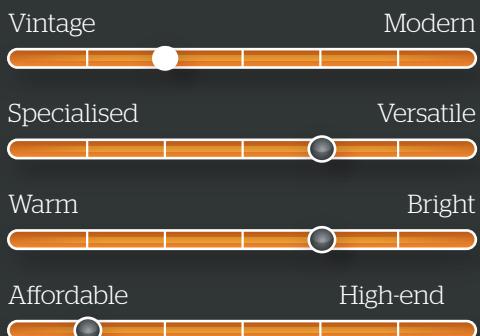
the fit and fin-
ts bass. You'd
ng this was
ument: The
k is a perfect
ep, not wide,



Vintage VJ74SVB 25th Anniversary

MSRP: (UK) £400 / (US) \$TBC

The Breakdown



For fans of

Amazing value for money.

Limited edition guitars.

Trevor Wilkinson's fine work.

For more information, please visit:

vintageguitarsus.com





not chunky, but certainly not too skinny. I'd almost forgotten to mention it as I found nothing wrong with the neck that would catch my attention! The 22 frets are polished and finished to a high standard and a joy to navigate the quality rosewood fretboard. You can expect a 38mm nut, pretty standard for a Jazz and with that, a Graphtec NuBone nut is a superb upgrade over standard nondescript plastic examples.

We have the usual 34" scale here, too, so you will not have any issues installing your favourite brand of strings on to your new

bass when it needs it. That said, the stock strings are bright, helping to show off the characteristics this resonant instrument has. It's a lively tone, rich in harmonics, but dialling back the passive tone control, can easily deliver more throbbing bass sounds if that's your bag too.

It feels a bit like Trevor Wilkinson has made best efforts to get as much quality in at the price point rather than building a bass down to a price. I think he's succeeded; the 25th anniversary VJ74SVB could well be a bass you keep coming back to.

Sponsored by Rotosound



THE REVIEWS VINTAGE VJ74SVB 25TH ANNIVERSARY

It feels a bit like Trevor Wilkinson has **made best efforts** to get as much quality in at the price point rather than building a bass down to a price..."

Gi



Vintage VJ74SVB 25th Anniversary

MarkBass JP Black Lady 4 CR RW

The amazing team at MarkBass have blended all the most sought after features by a high class bassists into a single instrument with the MarkBass JP Black Lady 4 CR RW. Billed as a blend of elegance, simplicity and functionality, MarkBass added a vintage look to the design while adding the passion of any bass player thanks to our awesome MB Instrument Pre on board.

Dan Veall tells us more.

MARKBASS

is enjoying 20 years in production, and those identifiable yellow cones are very much still gracing stages across the world!

I remember when Markbass first hit the markets here in the UK with their early adoption of high-efficiency D-Class amplification in the shape of the Little Mark amplifier heads, coupled with lightweight speaker cabinets that used neodymium magnets in their drivers.

Indeed, I recall, whilst writing this review, sitting in a hotel lobby with Glenn Hughes back in 2005 discussing the 6x10 MarkBass rig he used that night. I then reflect on the more recent videos I have recorded looking at the Marcus Miller signature range of amplifiers and cabinets. Marco De Virgiliis is not a man who has rested on the laurels of being the owner of a defining brand in bass amplification.

You only have to look at the broad product catalogue currently available to see that the brand is progressive.

That takes us to the box I unpacked earlier, inside, one Markbass JP Black Lady bass with an included gig bag. Italian handmade, each bass is essentially unique as they are not mass-produced, I understand from the literature. Inspect the Markbass website as there are plenty more options in the JP range alone than I have space in this review to cover! Whilst you are there, check out the Gloxy, Kimo and Kilimanjaro basses too!

Let's start with the name. I also understand that JP has an alder body, whilst the JF models have Val Di Fiemme spruce bodies and the JG models have basswood. JP and JF get block inlays on the fretboard. The CR in the title tells us that the Bass has chrome hardware and the RW, a rosewood fretboard.

Whilst we are mentioning the JP, here has a super comfortable maple neck, and there is a definite 70's vibe here with the white pearl block inlays and the bone nut too. The strings are, as I would expect, of the highest quality with not even a suggestion of buzz or edge. Round the back, the maple neck has a vintage polyurethane lacquer finish that adds to the 70's styling.

On that subject, we have to move straight to the electric guitar side of things as that we have two single coil pickups and, yes, the classic position. The single coil pickup is designed to Markbass' own specification. You can expect that classic rock sound we all know and love, with a nice bit of colour in the tone from the pickups blended.

You'd be forgiven for thinking that just another J bass, but that's not the case as we don't have a standard

gh percentage of great example of bal-
allowing total expres-

ioning inlays, JP
nfortable jazzy
e's no denying the
the mother-of-
nd binding. JP
and those 20 frets
ct, beautifully set
gestion of a rough
ck, we can see the
ntage tinted gloss
er keeping with

can zoom
tronics and see
ngle-coil J type
ey are in a 70's
-coil pickups are
ss specifications.
wonderful J
and love, with a
there when both

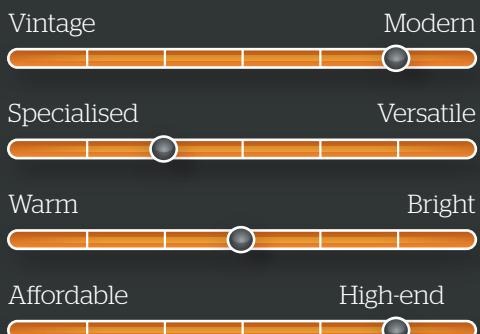
r thinking this is
but noticing that
dard offset body,



MarkBass JP Black Lady 4CR RW

MSRP: (UK) £1679 / (US) \$TBC

The Breakdown



For fans of

MarkBass quality.

Great versatility.

Vintage look.

For more information, please visit:

www.markbass.it



in favour of something a bit more “P” will tell you that this bass is trying to cover more than the usual.. well, bases, if you excuse the pun. It is with that we turn our attention away from the custom made machine heads and die-cast bridge towards all Black Lady’s onboard electronics.

A photograph of a man with long, wavy hair and a beard, wearing a dark t-shirt with a graphic on it, playing a black MarkBass JP Black Lady 4 CR RW bass guitar. He is sitting down, and a guitar amplifier is visible in the background. A large circular play button icon is overlaid in the center of the image. In the top left corner of the frame, there is a logo consisting of the letters 'Gi' in a stylized font, with 'Gi' in white and a small orange dot above the 'i'.

MarkBass JP Black Lady 4 CR RW

This bass has an active preamplifier, by Markbass. Besides the usual Volume, Volume, Tone jazz bass arrangement (That I have to say I am not a massive fan of, I'd prefer a no-loss pan control or selector switch for series and parallel options too) we have a three-band active equaliser. A brief look at the Markbass website and the EQ centres are: 80hz, 500hz and 8.5k and you'll get 15dB of boost and cut from each control. There's plenty of room for super-charging that jazz bass tone. I think the bass EQ centre works well with the punchy high bass frequencies coming from the pickups and a nice bit of sparkle from the treble. Black lady produces a modern edge to a classic sound that is easily dialled back for an authentic vintage flavour.

The EQ has a bypass option, though I'd point out that I do like that the passive tone control works with or without the active EQ.

The Markbass headstock is stylish and is very much worth a closer look if you missed it the first time in my video! You'll

see that the highlighted colour matches the body. A nice touch if you can't decide upon a natural or matching headstock. Have both!

As these basses are luthier made in Italy, they aren't just factory runs. There's an attention to detail expected, and the finishing should be exemplary. Of course, with that, prices will reflect this extra treatment.

The JP basses offer some welcome touches, such as an optional Hipshot D-Tuner and a logo'd neck plate. The JF models also come in a 'battered look', should road-worn be your thing, and we can't forget fretless. For a five string version, you'll need to look at the Gloxy range as I can't see a four string option in the J model range.

I'd have liked to have seen the action a little lower 'as standard', but that's just personal taste on otherwise a super bass to have in for review.

END <<

Vox Starstream 1H Active Artist Bass

Dan Veall reviews a brand new model from Vox's Starstream Bass range—the 1H Active Artist Bass. With its short-scale neck and compact body, it provides not only visual impact but also numerous other features such as easy transportation. From its innovative frame structure, lightweight design and unrivalled body balance, the Starstream Bass is the future we've all been waiting for.

READERS of Guitar

Interactive who have been with me for the last ten years will know that as much as I am a sucker for classic lines and the modern onboard electronics, I most definitely applaud anyone who is willing to challenge the normal and expected. Variety is certainly a spice of life, and thankfully we are all different in our tastes and needs.

Vox's Starstream basses I think may well be one of the most quirky of models we have had in the basement – and at first I wasn't sure if I was going to like them.

I'll tell you more about my feelings later on, so keep on reading. Let's get into the details of the bass first. They are in some ways similar, but also very different.

First up, the 2S model, in black like the A1H we have here in red, both came in Vox soft cases along with

a basic tool kit and batteries where required.

The model number refers to the pickup types: 2S, two single-coil pickups, A1H, one humbucker. Nice and simple to remember. The A1H includes upgrades and is an “active” preamplifier model.

Both instruments are insanely lightweight, and that is hardly surprising considering that the physical amount of wood used for the body is small, with the 2S, its Poplar. The A1H gets a solid Alder version. Around the wood centre body section is an outer ABS plastic body-shaped frame. You may mistakenly conclude that this may be flimsy or of little substance, but I was actually very pleased with how solid the framework was and comfortable when I sat down with each bass. I really liked how my right forearm rested at a pleasant angle, and my hand rested over my usual picking

position without fatigue for some time.

There are a couple of things to point out whilst I'm talking about the ABS frame. It's great off for making travel easy if you were thinking of taking this instrument. The only downside is again applaud the way the mounts on the bus bar. This makes standing and leaning against an object the bass won't get damaged or likely to fall over. On the other hand, basses, I use the low profile as it holds the instrument securely against me. You can see a video on that for what I mean.

Moving away from the body at the necks of each bass, they have a 30.32" scale length and two saddles. They are made of bone and within my gig bag.

ass

tist Bass. With
as practical
gn to the bille

fatigue after playing

of things I'd like
t I am telling you
me. It doesn't come
elling more easy,
ng this was a travel
ther thing is that I
use of double strap
tt end of the bass.
ng the bass up for
amp more easy, as
scratched and is less
On my own gigging
ower mount anyway
rument more se-
 Maybe I should do
r you all to see what

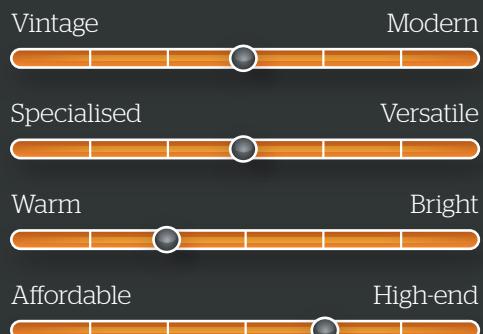
In the body, let's look
h bass, sizing up
e length from nut
re short scale basses
gantic hands, they



Vox Starstream 1H Active Artist Bass

MSRP: (UK) £555 / (US) \$TBC

The Breakdown



For fans of

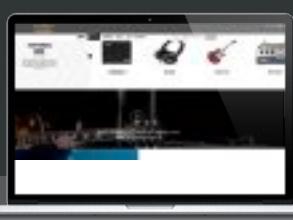
Superb playability

Stand-out looks

Value for money

For more information, please visit:

voxamps.com



sure felt it to me. No sweat though, I've played 6 string guitar for years too so, it's not anything I couldn't get used to, with time.

S2 gets the unusual choice of purple-heart for its fretboard, but it's a nice tight grain and looks good. Vox has topped A1H with an Ebony fretboard and on to each model, 21 frets and a 38mm nut width (like a jazz bass). Each strung with standard gauge

strings, though I found that the S2 may have enjoyed a certain amount of playtime before arriving at our studio, as the strings were showing signs of use. I think you'll hear the difference in tone between the two models in that respect. A1H, no such issues, which rewarded us with a rich, resonant sound out of the bag!

Both instruments are available in black, white or red, the latter absolutely winning



Vox Starstream 1H Active Artist Bass



it for me. Looks fantastic and eye-catching, though I would have loved to have seen a maple fretboard on the A1H artist model to top off the look! Hey Vox, how about it?

From now on, the differences between the models become more apparent, ultimately leading me to which model I preferred. You'll have your favourite too, as they both excel in their own areas.

S2 is an all passive example and the single-coil pickups do a good job at producing those “jazzy” sort of tones. The rear pickup having the good mid presence to it, though some of the 60/40 type blends on the volume-volume controls were more subtle than some jazz basses. A good sturdy sound though, and I am sure that with new strings, you'd be hard pushed to tell this was a short scale, small body instrument in the mix!

Standard hardware, including enclosed tuning keys, round up the S2 model, which overall is finished to a good standard with no rough edges on the fretwork. Tuning stability in our studio example was also good.

A1H Artist is a higher specification model and, I have to say, shows a marked differ-

ence to the S2. Sadly, the Artist version of the S2, the A2S model I understand, is no longer available, which I think is a shame. If it delivers in the same way the A1H does, it would have been a super instrument to cover, I am sure.

On the hardware front, A1H gets the Gotoh treatment, a significant upgrade, but it doesn't stop there. Outcomes the standard electronics and Aguilar's monstrous AG-4M “MM” style pickup comes paired with the famous OBP-2 onboard preamp. The two combine so well given the bright and zingy output of the pickup and the amount of low end boost the OBP can deal up. I will be honest, it was at this point I started smiling. I immediately drop-tuned the A1H without a need to tweak my tuning. The growl and depth of the A1H's tone pleased me greatly. It really is much larger than life with those fresh strings on board. It doesn't sound like a short scale. This particular example is impressive and I would like one!

The A1H is a wolf in sheep's clothing that I think will fit more musical settings than my first preconceived ideas were when I first saw it. Prepare to be surprised!

END»

THE Columns

Inside each and every issue, we have a host of exclusive lessons – with our team of **world-class contributors** offering their unique insight, knowledge and expertise to help you get the most out of your own playing.

Gi85

CLASS IS BACK
IN SESSION

COLUMNS EXCLUSIVE
Gi





Soloing Over Chord Changes – Part 3

Class is in session. **Tom Quayle** brings you a brand new and exclusive lesson for Guitar Interactive Magazine.

Next Steps

HI guys and welcome back to my column for Guitar Interactive Magazine. I hope you've all been practicing your intervals and enjoying the development of your fretboard knowledge along the way. For this issue we're going to be focusing on scales and their application for practicing over chord changes.

Scales often get a bad rap for being unmusical and certainly not something to focus on during

your improvisations for fear of producing very boring, shapeless lines. However, as I've mentioned before in previous columns, scales are a fantastic way of representing the chords or harmony that you're playing over in a linear fashion. Since each scale contains all of the chord tones and extensions of each chord you'll be soloing over, they are fantastic for training your ears and eyes on the fretboard and creating a linear connection between each chord. Of course, producing good music with this knowledge requires a series

of practice techniques and a lot of experience and creativity, but for now, simply playing each scale against the chord will be a great exercise for both your ears and eyes let alone your fingers of course.

For this issue we're going to revisit our II-V-I progression rather than use the more complex chord progression from issue 18 (we will come back to this though). To remind you of which chords we'll be using let's lay down all of the diatonic 7th chords in the key of C major as follows: -



Soloing Over Chord Changes: Part 3

Cmaj7 Dm7 Em7 Fmaj7 G7 Am7 Bm7b5

Now you can see that the II chord is Dm7, the V chord is G7 and the I chord is Cmaj7. From our previous modal studies in earlier issues (please feel free to check out my earlier columns for more information on modes and chord scales) we also know that over the II chord – Dm7 – we need to play D Dorian, over the V chord – G7 – we need to play G Mixolydian and over the I chord – Cmaj7 – we need to play C major or Ionian (two names for the same scale).

For some of you, alarms bells may already be ringing saying ‘wait – these are all the same scale, why don’t we just think C major over all three chords?’ Well, by playing from the root note of each chord we outline the specific sound of that chord giving us the sound of the II-V-I progression in a linear or scalic manner as opposed to a generic C major sound with no definition of each chord. We’re trying to develop a chord specific approach here so it’s good practice to treat each chord as an individual entity as opposed to a generic part of our C major tonality.

As far as creating a practice regime for this kind of approach goes, we can take this a lot further than simply playing one octave of each scale over each chord from root to root.

Our next step would be to take each scale and play it over its relevant chord from 3rd to 3rd and then from 5th to 5th and finally 7th to 7th. By starting from each chord tone and progressing through one octave like this we develop an ability to see the harmony in a linear fashion from any chord tone of each chord as it occurs. We could now, with lots of practice, thread a line through the progression starting from any chord tone we like and always know where to go next regardless of which chord tone we wished to start from. Now our scalic abilities take on a much more powerful and musical force giving us definite ‘routes’ through the chord progression and a very strong visual and aural path from which to improvise.

In the accompanying TAB for this issue you’ll find multiple fingerings for each scale starting from the root, 3rd, 5th and 7th of each chord. Learn these scales by shape and sound and try to find as many fingerings for each of them as you can. In the next issue we’ll develop this further with some limitation exercises to really test your knowledge of the fret board and return to our original chord progression.

See you there and good luck!

END <<



Rhythm Concepts Column 9

Guitar Interactive Magazine veteran, **Sam Bell** continues his new and exclusive column focused on getting the most out rhythm guitar playing.

IN this issue's column I am going to continue on the same theme as the previous instalment of this series. I am presenting you with a short etude which once broken down to its core parts give us some inspiring ideas of how to approach chordal playing in our own music or as an accompanist. I want to showcase some unique ways of playing 'Rhythm Guitar' a phrase which denotes there is a difference between a Lead Guitarist and Rhythm. I feel however the lines can be blurred and as a 'Rhythm' player we should be able to play melodically and creatively using our knowledge of Lead technique. In this column we're going to be taking a look at using Tapping to add to our chords and create harp-like flurrys, we're not going to get too technical here, but we're hopefully going to tap into some fresh 'Rhythm' guitar approaches. Let's dive in with this column's example:

The Harmony:

This examples chord sequence is very spacious and simple. We have the following chords:

DMaj9 – C#m7#5 (x3) – F#m9

These chords come from the Key of A Major/F# Minor. The D chord is the IV chord of A.

The Example:

This columns example is very simplistic but the focus here is more on space and also implementing the tapping technique into our Chordal playing. We've all seen many great uses of Tapping, this particular concept that we're going to dive into in this column has been used by many great players such as Allan Holdsworth and Tosin Abasi to 'add' to chords in a modern sounding way. It's important to note that even though I am using a clean tone, I am using a touch of compression to even out the notes sound so the voicings ring through more clearly.

If we take a look at the very first chord, we have the essence of today's lesson. I am hold-

ing down a DMaj9 chord, I hammer on to the M3rd on the B string my little finger before tapping the 12th fret B string which gives us the 13th over our D Chord. We're using the fretted chord effectively as a Melodic Capo. Visually I am thinking about the chord voicing and what I can technically do with it in terms of fingerings then for the (in my case) right hand tapping, I am visualising inversions and extensions of the chord higher up the neck. We could also go as far as visualising whole scale fingerings higher up the neck in order to find other melodic notes. Check out the video breakdown for further explanation and thoughts on this. Be sure to refer to the TAB that comes with this lesson, analyse where the melody notes are, which ones stand out to you?

The Nature and Sound of tapping mixed with the guitars unique standard tuning gives us the ability to 'add' to our chords whilst they are being sounded. Almost like playing a Piano, playing a chord with the left hand and then adding to it with notes in the right (however Piano players can do much more than that) but on the Guitar it's not as easy as we can only really sound up to 6 notes (depending on the fingerings of the chord voicings) at the same time.

Conclusion:

Tapping doesn't have to be Van Halens Eruption or Michael Romeos Sea of Lies, with the focus on creating lead lines that cascade like molten lava over the musical soundscape (which is awesome) Tapping can be used to add to our chordal playing, give us more freedom of note choice with voice leading in our chordal playing, it also gives us a more piano like tone and attack on the notes which can lead to all kinds of inspiring ideas. Have lots of fun and I'll see you soon at Guitar Interactive Magazine!



Rhythm Guitar Concepts – Part 10

THE QUIETROOM_GIORGIO SERCI

FIN

SPONSORED BY
YAMAHA



SPONSORED BY



YAMAHA

THE QUIET ROOM GIORGIO SERCI CREATIVE FINGERSTYLE

Giorgio Serci

CREATIVE FINGERSTYLE



Study n.24

Giorgio Serci, award winning guitarist, composer, arranger and long-time guitar tutor at The Academy of Contemporary Music, continues his acoustic column in this issue of Guitar Interactive Magazine.

HELLO there and welcome to Guitar Interactive's Quietroom. In this column we'll be looking at another composition of mine called Study n.24

As always, all short pieces I write for Guitar Interactive feature various compositional ideas I really enjoy using. Composition could be compared to a game with its own rules and the added benefit of allowing us to use our creative side of the brain as well as the pragmatic one. Composing entirely with our pragmatic side could easily result in unin-

spired, square or cold pieces. Similarly, relying exclusively on the divine inspiration might mean having to wait days or weeks before we can actually complete a piece. The moral of the story, as nearly always, is that both sides have to work in a collaborative manner, meeting halfway. This 'should' ensure compositions that transpire internal logic as well as invention.

This piece features a few compositional and arranging ideas gravitating on what is known as 'quartal harmony', which consists of using intervals of 4ths to con-

struct less predictable harmonic structures, with a distinct quality compared to the more common triadic harmony. Once a melodic idea consisting of a descending E Mixolydian mode (Major scale with a b7) was conceived, each melody note was harmonized in diatonic fourths, as evident in bar 1 etc.

Another strategy evident from the beginning of the piece is the ‘ostinato’ bass figure played by the ‘p’ finger, which acts as a pedal note, but also as rhythmic propeller, particularly when juxtaposed to the chords played by the ‘i, m, a’ fingers, at times implying a polyrhythm, including a 5/8 against a 4/4. This is evident in bar 3, 4 etc.

The harmonic content of this piece can be described as follows, and it could be described as 16 bars Blues.

E7	%	%	%	%
A7		A#O7	E7	C#7#9
F#m7 E/G# A7 A#O7	B7	E7	B7	

As always, I would like to recommend exploring the above-mentioned techniques in order to compose your own pieces. We have to allow ourselves to make mistakes and reflect on the reasons why we like or not a particular sound, a chord progression or modulation. Eventually, these sounds will become part of your musical lexicon and you’ll be able to use these with fluidity and effectiveness.

The picking-hand pattern is predominantly as follows:

(Please note E=low E string, e= high E string)

‘p’ focuses of the bass lines, while ‘i, m, a’ play the melody and countermelody or harmony part.

Play this part in a relaxed and clear manner, making sure your thumb is a little forward compared to the ‘i, m, a’ fingers, in order to prevent it from colliding with the ‘i’ finger. As always, focus on attack and tonal consistency. The melody and the supporting harmonies will be played with the ‘a’ finger, so more attack is needed to outline the melody.



Next we are going to look at the left hand part (chord shapes):

BAR 1-2: The ‘ostinato’ E bass will alternate with the following chord shapes:

Ring f on fret 12 of e, middle f on fret 12 of B and index on fret 11 of G.

The same shape played down 2 frets.

Index on fret 7 of G, ring f on fret 9 of B and little f on fret 9 of e.

Index plays 3/6 barre’ on fret 7.

BAR 3-4: Same ‘ostinato’ E bass with the following chord shapes:

Ring f on fret 12 of e, middle f on fret 12 of B and index on fret 11 of G.

The same shape played down 2 frets.

Index on fret 7 of G, ring f on fret 9 of B and little f on fret 9 of e.

Index on fret 6 of G, middle and ring f on fret 7 of B and e.

Same shape down two frets.

Middle f on fret 3, index on fret 2 of B and ring f on fret 3 of e.

Same chord shape, slides up a semitone.



Giorgio Serci - Study n.24

BAR 5-8: As from bar 1 till 4, except the final fill.

BAR 9-10: The ‘ostinato’ A bass will alternate with the following chord shapes:

Ring f on fret 5 of e, middle f on fret 5 of B and index on fret 4 of G.

The same shape played down 2 frets.

Open G, middle f on fret 2 of B and ring f on fret 2 of e.

Index on fret 1 of A, open G and e, while the middle f is on the 2nd fret of B.

At this point, play an arpeggio featuring the A# played above, hammer-on to fret 4 of A, middle f on fret 2 of D.

On the ‘+’ of 4 play and E minor with the open E, G, B and e strings and add index on fret 1 of G. Next, fret 2, 4 and 2 of A.

BAR 11: Open E, index on fret 2, middle f on fret 3 and then fret 4 of the same string.

BAR 12: Index on fret 2 of D, and of A. Middle f on fret 3 of A, and ring f on fret 4 of the same string. Next, play a C#7(#5#9), with ring f on fret 4 of A, middle f on fret 3 of D, index on fret 2 of G, open B and e. On the ‘+’ of 4, play an F#m with barre’ on fret 2 and little f on fret 5 of e.

BAR 13: Play a E/G# with barre’ on fret 4 and middle f on fret 5 of B. Next, play an A7 with open A, G and e with the middle f on fret 2 of B. Finally, add index on fret 1 of A.

BAR 14: Play a B7 with middle f on fret 2 of A, index on fret 1 of D, ring f on fret 2 of G and open B. Next, the fill with ring f on fret 9 of e, middle f on fret 8 and then 9 of B (by sliding), open e, B and e with G on the ‘+’ of 4.

BAR 15: Open e, little f on fret 4 of E, open A, index on fret 1 of A.

BAR 16: Play a B7 as per bar 14. Play lick, featuring fret 2 of D, fret 3 and 4 of A, fret 3 and 2 of E and open E.

Repeat the 15 bars from the top and take the final bar.

FINAL BAR: Fret 2, 4 and 2 of A. Fret 2 of D. Finish with an E7#9 chord (middle f on fret 7 of A, index on fret 6 of D, ring f on fret 7 of G, little f on fret 8 of b, open e and E).

Congratulations, you have completed Study n.24!

As always, you will be able to download a transcription by selecting the menu option in this page.



I strongly recommend experimenting with a few picking variations, changing the chords as you wish in terms of voicing (higher or lower), as well as trying the same picking pattern on a different chord progression, or using a 'capo' on fret 2 for a brighter outcome.

When repeating any section twice or more, you may want to play 'sul ponticello', (closer to the bridge) or 'sul tasto' (over the frets) for more contrasting results.

Make sure you highlight the melody (singing is a great strategy to play the melody in more assertive and singing-like manner)

Focus on minimum-movement approach, as this will help delivering the piece in a more accurate and consistent manner, while saving energy.

This will complete this creative fingerstyle lesson.

I hope you will enjoy playing this study piece and that this will give you some ideas on how to write your own solo guitar compositions. If you would like to listen to any more of my compositions, please check the previous issues of Guitar Interactive magazine as well as any of my CDs, available from my website:



You can also find me on **instagram** on [giorgio_serci](#) or **twitter** [@giorgioserci](#) as well as on [facebook.com/giorgiosercimusic](#)

*Until the next time -
Good-bye.*

Check me out here at
www.giorgioserci.com



COLUMNS_NICK JENNISON

PART 4



Guitar
Interactive

GO247

SPONSORED BY

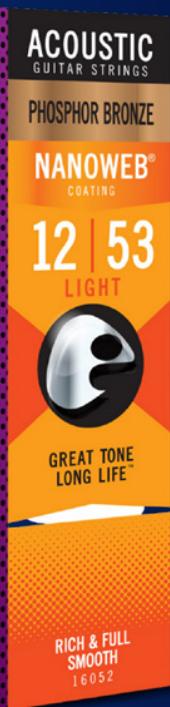


COLUMNS NICK JENNISON: SET-UP YOUR GUITAR LIKE A PRO - ACOUSTIC EDITION PART 2

Nick Jennison

MAKE YOUR ACOUSTIC GUITAR PLAY BETTER.

Sponsored by **ELIXIR Strings**



*SET-UP YOUR GUITAR LIKE
A PRO: PART 2 – ACOUSTIC
GUITAR EDITION*

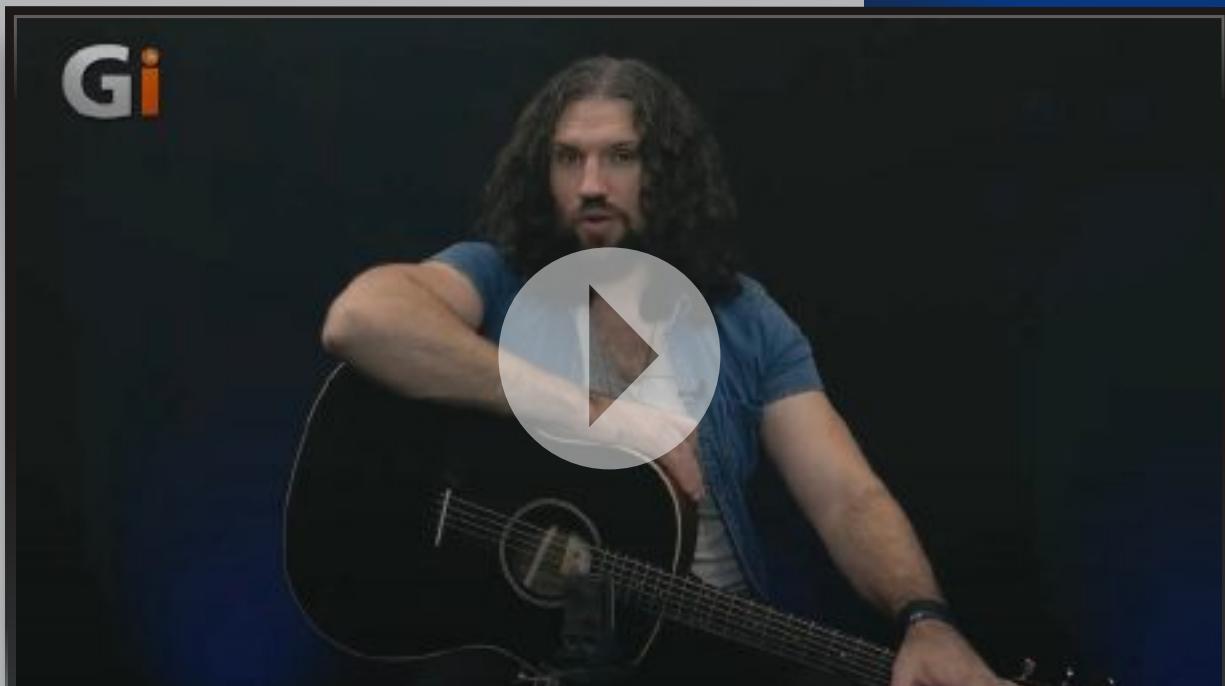
ELECTRIC guitarists are thoroughly spoiled when it comes to customising the sound of their guitars. Pickup changes, pedals, amps, modelers... is it any wonder so many guitarists spend more time fiddling with their gear than actually practicing?

But what about acoustic guitars? Surely an acoustic guitar sounds the way it sounds and that's that, right? Well, not

so much. Even ignoring the plugged-in sound of your acoustic (we have another lesson on that!), there's plenty you can do to make your acoustic guitar sound it's best.

TECHNIQUE CONSIDERATIONS:

First of all, let's address the human element. How you play your guitar makes a huge difference on the tone. If you're resting your arm on the guitar's soundboard, you can expect it to sound a little dead, since the top needs to vibrate freely to produce the guitar's best tone. Then there's the way you pick the strings - your pick angle, the position along the string's length, how hard you hit - all of these can have a big effect on your tone, and should be considered before you change anything else.



Set-Up Your Guitar Like A Pro: Part 2 - Acoustic Guitar Edition



PICKS:

On to the gear then, and we're going to start with the thing that actually strikes the string (unless you're playing fingerstyle of course!) - your pick. Different thicknesses, shapes and materials not only play differently, but they sound different too! A thin nylon pick will have a much different sonic signature than a stiff Ultex pick for example. Likewise, two picks of the same shape and thickness can sound very different - for example, an Ultex jazz III will have a very pronounced "chirp", while the same pick made from Tortex will be relatively "chirp-free". Even how worn the pick is can make a big difference, so it pays to experiment.

STRINGS:

Next up, the strings on your guitar can make a huge difference to your tone. We all know that dead strings sound rubbish, but it goes much further than that. There are three main considerations to make here - gauge, material and coating.

STRING GAUGE:

There's a common thought among guitarists that bigger always equals better with string gauge, but that's definitely not true. Firstly, the best string gauge is the one you can play

your best on. But if you want to use string gauge to adjust your tone, you can expect a little more roundness and a more pronounced thump out of heavier strings, while lighter strings usually sound brighter, lighter and more snappy.

STRING MATERIAL:

Probably much more important than string gauge is string material, and the two most common materials are phosphor bronze and 80/20 bronze. The former sounds full, rich and balanced, while the latter is brighter, zinger and more focused. As you'll hear in the video, material has a much bigger impact on tone than gauge, so choose wisely! For poking through a mix with maximum authority, 80/20 bronze is the way to go, but for a richer, deeper tone, reach for phosphor bronze.

COATING:

Lastly, coating can make a huge difference to the way a string sounds. Elixir were kind enough to provide us with two different coatings - their thinner "nanoweb" coated strings and the slightly thicker "polyweb" coated strings. Even with the same material and gauge (12s in 80/20 bronze), the tone was profoundly different. The "nanoweb" set sounds bright, clear and zingy, while the





“polyweb” has a warmth that’s reminiscent of a nylon string guitar, along with greatly reduced finger noise.

So if you’re finding yourself dissatisfied with the sound of your acoustic guitar, try some of the suggestions in this lesson. You’ll likely find the perfect tone for your personal style, and it’s way cheaper than buying a new guitar!

Are you an uncoated string player? Now is the time to try Elixir Strings’ NANOWEB

Coated acoustic guitar strings. A feather-weight coating protects your strings from tone-killing elements like corrosion, dirt, oil and sweat.

NANOWEB Coating delivers distinctive phosphor bronze warmth and sparkle together with extended tone life. End result – your strings sound and feel fresher for much longer.

For more information, click here:
<https://www.elixirstrings.com/guitar-strings#acoustic>





NICK JENNISON'S THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO MELODY & PHRASING

Go beyond just licks, and learn the secrets of how to construct the perfect melodic guitar solo packed with head-turning phrasing.

Improvisation guru **Nick Jennison** presents the key ingredients that make up modern blues, progressive rock and minor blues guitar phrasing; including note choice, resolution and nuance—combined into study solos to engage your ears as well as your fingers! Want to truly master your craft? Then check out part one of this exclusive Guitar Interactive course.

Ever wondered what goes into writing a truly great melody? What about solos that take you on a journey with them, like a story within a song? In this course, Nick Jennison guides you through the process of creating the kind of evocative, memorable lines that are the hallmark of not just great guitar players, but all great musicians.

The **Ultimate Guide to Melody & Phrasing** includes 50 examples of melodic development exploring everything from note choice, intervals and melodic contour to timing, expression and dynamics, along with three full-length solo studies in three different styles: “Modern

Soul,” “Melodic Prog” and “Minor Blues.” Each of these solo studies is accompanied by note-for-note tuition, as well as a complete masterclass explaining the rationale behind the composition.

If you want to become a more musical player, this is the course you've been waiting for.

Watch this entire course and more incredible lesson content with a **Gi Plus subscription.**



To find out more, visit: guitarinteractivemagazine.com/gi-plus/

